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## THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

### The Supremacy of Mozart—I.

**T**O-DAY, as 150 years ago, Mozart stands supreme in his comprehension of the capacity of the human voice, alike as a mechanical instrument and as a medium for musical expression. Without his rare understanding of the art, although he might always have written melodies of ineffable charm, he would never have been able to compose music for his singers that was so absolutely "vocal" in its nature, so rich in the qualities that call forth the highest feelings of the interpreter, so invariably true to the emotions that have to be expressed. In this immense gift he outshone all his giant rivals of the eighteenth century, including both Handel and Gluck; and, if equalled by one or two in the nineteenth it was only in certain branches of the art—as, for instance, Schubert, who was essentially a song-writer, which Mozart was not. Then, again, the amazing all-round ability of Mozart was fully on a par with that extraordinary originality which was one of the miracles

of his time. Not only did he write beautiful music, but he wrote music the like of which had never been heard before; operas entirely new in their construction, treatment, and character.

Listen to what Fétis, the famous French musical historian, said about *The Marriage of Figaro*. Writing sixty years ago in his "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens," he remarked, "The proportions of this score are colossal. It abounds with airs, duets, ensemble-pieces of different kinds in which the wealth of ideas, the taste, and freshness of the harmonies, modulations, and instrumentation unite in forming the most perfect combination. The two finales alone are equal to entire operas, more abundant in beauties of the first order than any other lyric production." Nothing heard or known before *The Marriage of Figaro* had given the idea of such a work. It aroused enthusiasm everywhere, and, of all Mozart's operas, it was the one best understood from the outset. It obtained



its greatest triumph in Prague, where a year later (November 4th, 1787) the first performance of *Don Giovanni* took place. The public there instantly recognised what a masterpiece Mozart had written for them and declared it to be "the finest, the most perfect opera that had ever been performed." The Viennese were slower to perceive this. As Fétis says, "Too many beauties were accumulated in the score, and those beauties were of an order too novel to be understood at first by the public; only a few musicians were capable of grasping the fact that Mozart had here attained the highest degree of invention and of the sublime. Opinions were divided, therefore; but ere long wiser counsels prevailed, and the whole country became enthusiastic over this immortal work of genius."

One hardly knows which to marvel at most, the extent or the variety of the strenuous and increasing labour that Mozart accomplished, whilst delicate and ailing, during the concluding years of his unparalleled career. Such activity, such slavery, was never equalled by any musician before or since. After *Don Giovanni* other great works were still to come, treading on each other's heels; operas such as *Così fan Tutte* (1790) and *The Magic Flute* (1791), with that miraculous final achievement, the *Requiem*, written and very nearly completed on his death-bed in 1791. But, enormous as was the quantity of that feverish output, it was not more astonishing than the development of style and the constant growth in the masterful handling of ideas that were pervading it all. No opera was exactly like its predecessor, though each in turn was pure Mozart.

The originality of *Il Seraglio* (1782) is said to have taken aback the Viennese tremendously. Said the Emperor Joseph II. to the composer: "It is too lovely for our ears; in fact, there are too many notes in it for me." "Precisely as many as are wanted," replied Mozart, who had only received 50 ducats for writing the opera! But four years later the music of *The Marriage of Figaro* sounded newer and more original still. For the treatment of the Beaumarchais comedy was entirely different; whilst another phase in the master's manner became manifest in *Don Giovanni*, and yet another in *The Magic Flute*. I do not say that these distinctions are palpable to every ear; but unquestionably they are there, and they help to account for the perennial freshness and charm that lift these operas of Mozart above all danger of sameness or monotony. Hence it is that one seems never to listen to them without an abiding sense of unalloyed enjoyment and satisfaction. Would only that the whole of the series that I have named above could be heard in London regularly every year! Perhaps a couple, not more, will be given at Covent Garden next season.

The available collection of Mozart gramophone records can scarcely be termed a truly representative

one, so far as the voice is concerned. Neither does it do justice to the glorious opportunities afforded by even the more familiar operas to which I have been referring. They do not nearly cover the ground. It is useless for one to begin to enumerate the vocal numbers and the many wonderful ensembles—essential features, of course, of any stage performance—that you may search for vainly in the current catalogues. Why is this? Are we to suppose that the interest of the buying public has become centred entirely in the symphonies and quartets and instrumental items generally? Or is it that during the period that these long-neglected gems have been receiving attention, the operas have been allowed to recede into the background? But anyhow, it is an unquestionable fact that the latter have never yet been recorded on a scale that nearly approached completeness. I do not go so far as to suggest that the time has come for recording any of Mozart's operas from the first note to the last. It would not pay to treat *Don Giovanni* or *Le Nozze di Figaro* in similar fashion to *Madam Butterfly* or *Faust* or the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. In any event, of course, it would be quite unnecessary to include the arid wastes (musically speaking) of *recitativo secco*, which embody the copious dialogue of the Abbé da Ponte; but of all the rest not a single number that is habitually heard in the theatre ought to go unrecorded. The only question on which I do entertain some doubt is whether the right singers are to be had for the purpose—singers, that is to say, of sterling ability, who have been trained adequately and correctly to interpret Mozart. And that is a very big question indeed.

#### "LE NOZZE DI FIGARO."

I propose to deal in this number with the two great operas which Mozart composed to Italian libretti; or rather I should say, perhaps, to discuss the merits of such records from these operas as have been deemed worthy of consideration. Most of them are new to me; though a good many, no doubt, have been in their various catalogues for many a season. With here and there an exception, they give me the impression of being executed by artists who were not completely at home in this kind of music; in some cases by artists who had never actually played the part under contribution, or had forgotten, whilst recording it, the dramatic situation in which the piece occurred. For instance, I cannot definitely state that Amelita Galli-Curci has never played Cherubino on the stage; but I can safely declare that her *Non so più* (H.M.V., D.A.214) contains no more evidence that she knows what she is singing about in her language than the same air, *Neue Freuden, neue Schmerzen* (Poly. 65654), rendered by Elisabeth Schumann who has certainly sung Cherubino, gives any indica-



tion that she does so in hers. The former is too staccato, the latter too slow and melancholy; they may be capital records, but they are incredibly unlike Mozart. We get more of the real thing in the *Non più andrai* of Mattia Battistini (H.M.V., D.B.736) and Mario Sammarco (H.M.V., D.B.607), both of which are lively and full of spirit. Each has such distinctive merits of its own that I do not care to praise one more than the other. As to the treatment of the *appoggiatura* they are entirely at variance; and I think the same may be said of practically all the other Mozart records that I have come across, Italian and German alike. The literal rendering is quite wrong, of course, and it is this alone that spoils, for my ear, the otherwise charming record of *Porgi amor* (alias *Heil'ge Quelle reiner Triebe*, Polydor 72910) made by that admirable soprano, Lotte Lehmann. It is the tender prayer for a return of happier days, uttered by the Countess at the opening of the second scene, and is followed almost immediately by the Page's Song, familiarly known to all the world as *Voi che sapete*.

I have yet to hear a perfect record of this inspired air. Frieda Hempel's is too pallid in tone, too suggestive of a choir-boy, too devoid of real warmth (H.M.V., D.A.675), or I should gladly say, "Here is the latest and best setting of a precious gem." But it is delicately phrased and free from liberties or exaggeration; which is more than can be said for Elisabeth Schumann's spasmodic, over-sentimentalised version (Poly. 65654.) in the German tongue. It is also included in the Patti group referred to below, but the part of Cherubino was never sung by the great prima donna. For the remainder of the first act, with its magnificent finale and all the smaller *bonnes bouches*, gramophone lovers must wait as patiently as I shall.

From the next or third scene we have refined and beautifully-balanced renderings of the two duets, viz., *Crudel! perchè*, by Geraldine Farrar and Antonio Scotti (H.M.V., D.K.118), and *Che soave zeffiretto*, by Emma Eames and Marcella Sembrich (H.M.V., D.K.121). Both bring back agreeable recollections of these artists and delightful bygone performances of the opera. I admire Scotti's suave *legato* pleading as the Count, and Farrar's sly, spirited repartee as Susanna. The other voices, in the "Letter" duet, are rather dark and sad, but for all that they furnish a fascinating record of two famous singers. The *Dove sono* of Claire Dux (Polydor 72890) is scarcely an outstanding example of pure vocalisation by one whom we know to be an excellent Mozart singer (though she is now, I understand, appearing on the operetta stage in Vienna). Nevertheless, and in spite of the German (*Nur zu flüchtig bist du entschwinden*), it is all very smooth and pleasing; the two sections are well contrasted; and in the round tone-colour

there is a just expression of the Countess's unbearable *ennui*. Those who would like to hear more of Claire Dux and Lotte Lehmann can do so by procuring their *Deh! vieni* or *Rosen-Arie*, as the Germans call it, which is my final excerpt from *Le Nozze*. The former (Poly. 72890) gives us the recitative but not the *appoggiature*; the latter (Poly. 72910) reverses this proceeding. So you can pay your money, etc., and be sure that what ever your choice you will have no regrets. Claire yields the lovelier timbre, perhaps, and is not quite so *triste* as Lotte; but the singing of both is tasteful and delicate in a very delightful degree.

#### "DON GIOVANNI."

From the opening scene of this opera there is nothing. The grumbling air for Leporello and the dramatic duet for Donna Anna and Don Ottavio are both missing. So, too, is the trio of the second scene where Don Giovanni and his loutish valet come across the hapless Donna Elvira. We make a notable start, however, with the next number, which is the famous catalogue song, *Madamina*, sung in Italian by Chaliapine (H.M.V., D.A.555, in two parts). Individual and unconventional, a *tour de force* of speed and patter, brimful of realistic humour, it represents the Russian singer in a highly characteristic mood. The *allegro* is really too quick to be distinct; it sounds more like an exercise than an attempt to deceive a poor ill-used lady. But the *andante* is wonderful—a rare piece of subtle colouring and writ "Leporello" all over. The varied repetition of the *la piccina*, even where it is so *pp* that the breathy tone fails to register the first time, is quite masterly, and the ending may fairly be called comical. After this one feels a certain amount of sympathy for Peter Dawson's clever effort to do the same air justice in English (H.M.V., B.1202); he takes it much slower, however, and is consequently easier to follow than the gifted "celebrity," while the orchestra is also more audible. Where the vowels permit, Mr. Dawson yields ample tone and suggestive colouring, especially in the *andante*, which is again the more satisfying side of the disc.

From *Madamina* it is not a far cry to *La ci darem*, a good example whereof is supplied by Geraldine Farrar and Antonio Scotti (H.M.V., D.K.111). The exquisite old duet is well sung by both artists; the Don on the whole a trifle more prominent than the coquettish Zerlina, but not exuberantly so, while the timbres mingle agreeably and the *legato* is never disturbed by a "wobble." Thence we pass to a German version of *Dalla sua pace*, one of the most trying airs for tenor that Mozart has written. I cannot say that I care for it in German or that I find anything to admire in this rendering by Herman Jadlowker (Polydor 72538), which is sentimental to tearfulness and badly disfigured by



slurs and scoops. Pity 'tis that a fine voice should not be better used. Don Giovanni's aria in praise of wine, which follows, is quite another affair. It chiefly needs voice, and of that it receives enough and to spare from the ever-generous Titta Ruffo in *Fin ch'an del vino* (H.M.V., D.A.357). It is delivered, moreover, with immense *brio*, or what we term "go."

After this comes the irresistible *Batti, batti*, in which Zerlina wheedles Masetto, her clownish peasant lover, until he forgives her for her flirtation with the amorous Don. Once upon a time the perfect model for realizing the fascination of this delicious air was the incomparable Adelina Patti, who included it among the group of records which she made at Craig-y-Nos Castle not many years before her death. Alas, these efforts came too late to afford more than a pale reflection of the diva's marvellous voice and faultlessly pure Mozart style; yet there is a something that she alone could have given us in the specimen that survives (H.M.V., 03055), and for her sake I for one shall always treasure it with all its faults. (By the way, it is sung much too fast and the piano accompaniment is a mere scramble, while the once glorious Patti tone is only present in miniature.) In the same piece you may also listen to Marcella Sembrich (H.M.V., D.B.428), Luisa Tetrazzini (H.M.V., D.B.537), Frieda Hempel (Polydor T.24006), and Elisabeth Schumann (Polydor 65655); this last only sung in German. I like them best in the order in which I have here written them down. Bar a misplaced high note at the end, the style of the Sembrich record is irreproachable; but, oddly enough, the German sopranos, despite their more recent recording, do not achieve the true Mozart reading of *Batti, batti*.

Nothing from the wonderful ball-room scene—not even the tuneful minuet that everybody used to hum; not a sign of the trio of maskers, so horribly difficult to keep perfectly in tune; and, of course, not a bar from the immortal finale to the first act. The second is mainly represented by the piquant serenade with the pizzicato string accompaniment which Don Giovanni (impersonating Leporello) sings beneath Donna Elvira's window. Several eminent baritones have, of course, done this for the H.M.V.—for example, Maurice Renaud (D.851), Antonio Scotti (D.B.668), Emilio Gogorza (D.B.184), and Titta Ruffo (D.A.357). Of these I like best the Gogorza, not only for its vocal qualities, but because the tempo and general interpretation are in accord with tradition. Being too short to fill the whole side, each artist provides the requisite full measure with a little extra contribution; thus Renaud repeats the last verse in Italian; Scotti adds the *Quand'ero paggio* from *Falstaff*; Gogorza appropriately gives the serenade from Berlioz's *Faust*; and Titta Ruffo—but no, I am

wrong, Ruffo adds nothing; he takes the whole thing so slowly, makes so many pauses, that he adds naught save a long high note to finish with, and so completes his *ad captandum* version.

Of Zerlina's second air, *Vedrai carino*, I have two capital records, the better of which is by Lucrezia Bori (H.M.V., D.A.130), a charming singer with a neat and pretty style that just fits the piece. The other, by Elisabeth Schumann (Polydor 65655), is in the German translation, *Wenn du fein fromm bist*, certain sentences of which remind one rather of a clucking hen. But apart from the consequent lack of suavity there is little fault to find, the tone being clear and musical, the words well enunciated, and the recording excellent. There remains only to speak of Don Ottavio's great air, *Il mio tesoro*, as rendered by John McCormack (H.M.V., D.B.324) and Herman Jadlowker (Polydor 72538, see above). The former is worthy of the Irish tenor in the purity and smoothness of its phrasing and *sostenuto*, in the admirable control that enables him to execute the extended run in a single breath, and its textual accuracy throughout. Personally, I prefer in this air a more heroic manner and a dark tone, rather than a *voix blanche*, but that shall be my sole criticism of an extremely artistic record. Anyhow, I prefer it to the robust illustration given by the German tenor, who has no idea of contrast, and is heavy and tremulous, with his *Tränen vom Freund getrocknet*, where he should be light and graceful and steady. No; decidedly these masterpieces sound best in the Italian to which Mozart wrote them.

HERMAN KLEIN.

#### December 7th, 1791. Mozart died.

"I wish earnestly that I could impress on all friends of music . . . the same depth of sympathy and appreciation as I have regarding the inimitable works of Mozart; that I might make others feel and enjoy them equally."—HAYDN.

(FROM *Thoughts on Music*, A CALENDAR SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY HERVEY ELWES. SIX SHILLINGS NET, POSTAGE 6D.)

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# NOVEMBER RECORDS AND OTHER MATTERS

By THE EDITOR

IT is time that our readers woke up and began to consider their duty toward modern British music. Gramophiles had some excuse for displaying indifference to modern works so long as they were denied the great classics of the past. But that is now an old story, and I do want you all to make a great effort and to help this cause. Considering the lack of support with which the recording companies have had to contend, they deserve the highest praise for their efforts to keep British music to the fore. This little sermon is prompted by the two records of Gustav Holst's suite for strings, known as the *St. Paul's*. When some twenty-five years ago, a beautiful old Georgian house in Brook Green was pulled down and a girls' school erected on the site, a debt was left to beauty which Mr. Gustav Holst did something to repay when, as music master to that school, he composed this suite. Nothing more delightful and nothing better recorded has appeared on the gramophone, and if I find when I make enquiries that the publication of this work has not been appreciated and that my readers are ceasing to support me when I put them on to a really good thing, I shall give up writing any more criticisms in THE GRAMOPHONE. It only makes me look ridiculous when I am told by sales' managers that public support for a work which I have gone out of my way to welcome enthusiastically shows a poor return from their point of view. Only last month I was informed that the César Franck Quartet had been very disappointing that way. In that case, as I argued in your defence, some excuse might be made on account of the length of the work and its consequent cost. But I was none the less disgusted inwardly. People are continually writing to THE GRAMOPHONE to testify their conversion to good music by the simple process of going on listening to it. Readers who write and tell us that we are getting too highbrow simply do not know what "highbrow" means. If I take the trouble to play through every single record that is sent me every month while I am in the middle of a very difficult and very urgent piece of writing, my readers might, I think, at least take the trouble to pay some attention to what I say. Well, I shall make the *St. Paul's Suite* my double-starred fear-nothing selection for this month. If the only result of that is that I am told next time I am in London that the sales of the *St. Paul's Suite* are very disappointing, I shall have seriously to consider whether the amount of time I waste in listening to rubbish is worth wasting. The companies can sell all the rubbish they want without any help or hindrance from me. If I can't help the sales of good stuff, I intend to retire from the fray.

The Vocalion records of Jelly d'Aranyi in Mozart's violin *Concerto in G* are thoroughly satisfactory. With so much about Mozart in this number I need not say any more than that, if I had to choose which I would have of the three violin concertos of Mozart now available on the gramophone, this is the one I should choose. Another Mozart record that must on no account be missed this month is a really lovely rendering of *Deh! vieni, non tardar*, by Fritz Jokl, issued by Parlophone. Moreover, on the other side is an equally lovely rendering of one of the *Queen of the Night* arias (*Fire burns in my heart*); this is the only record I know of *Deh! vieni* which contains the preliminary recitative. On the whole, I should be inclined to call this the best soprano record that Parlophone have issued since *Senta's Ballade*, and I shall be shocked, hurt, and surprised if it is not one of the most popular. I can't say I think the Parlophone *G minor Symphony* of Mozart as good as the Vocalion version. The criticism of *Till Eulenspiegel* I shall leave till an article on Strauss on the gramophone, which I can promise early next year. The other vocal record from Parlophone is also very good, *Elizabeth's Greeting* sung by Heckmann-Bettendorf on one side and *Lohengrin's Farewell* on the other sung by Max Hirzel. Also from Parlophone this month comes the best record so far of the Irmeler Madrigal Choir, Bach's glorious *Come, sweet death* and Mozart's exquisite lullaby, *Sleep my little Prince*. A very pleasant potpourri from Delibes' *Sylvia* by the Edith Lorand Orchestra should not be overlooked.

In the Columbia list Sammons and Murdoch have given us three splendid records of Grieg's *Sonata in G major*. Here is a good opportunity for readers who have not yet taken the plunge into chamber music. It has as much simple melody as anybody could want, and though some of us may think it a bit on the sentimental side there are always moments when we crave for sentiment as we crave for chocolate cream. I was rather disappointed by the Lener version of Beethoven's great *A minor Quartet*. There has always been a tendency by this quartet to whine and it has never been more noticeable than in this performance. These late quartets of Beethoven are intended to appeal to gramophiles who require the very best and I cannot believe that any unprejudiced person would not criticise this performance somewhat harshly. Nor was I greatly struck by the *Oberon Overture* conducted by Sir Henry Wood. Nor did any of the Columbia vocal records make much of an impression on me this month. In some ways the most astonishing records in the Columbia list are two of a steel



guitar. After hearing them I felt I was standing on a gramophonic peak of Darien. The Isthmus of Panama is not a pleasant place and steel guitars are not pleasant instruments, but on the other side of Panama stretches the Pacific and on the other side of steel guitars stretch symphonies of Beethoven recorded with a realism as truly astounding as the recording of these steel guitars. In ten years time I venture to prophesy that I shall look back on these two records as Cortez must have looked back to that peak in Darien.

The H.M.V. bulletin for November is strangely dull for them. The best thing in it is a splendid record of Tito Schipa singing two delicious old Italian songs on one side, and (when sung by a tenor of his calibre) the ever welcome *O sole mio* on the other. The *Midsummer Night's Dream Nocturne* with all the help of the latest methods of recording will be considered by most readers a fiasco. However, I suppose H.M.V. can afford not to bother about their November bulletin when they can place to their credit that splendid album of *Parsifal* records, which, with the exception of the Göta Ljungberg record, are really marvellous. I still stick to my opinion that *Parsifal* has nothing whatever to do with religion, and that the value of its symbolism is on a level with the transformation scene of a pantomime, and that its music is one consistent steady hammering below the belt. But, after all, my own reaction to *Parsifal* only makes the expression of my admiration for all these records more sincere. To be sure, massed Jew's harps occasionally take the place of massed strings, and hurdy-gurdies occasionally usurp the woodwind, but on the whole we have to acknowledge a superb achievement.

Another month with the new H.M.V. machine leaves my opinion of it what it was when I first wrote about it. In criticising its vocal reproduction I exposed myself to the pointed questions of several correspondents who have written to ask how, if the vocal reproduction is not pure, can the instrumental reproduction be pure. Well, I must admit that this is a bit of a teaser; and I hope that one of our forensic readers will give us the benefit of a really good essay on this subject in the Forum. I cannot believe that my ear would not be growing tired already if the orchestral definition were as blurred as some of our purists maintain. I still think that Mr. Balmain's instrument, plus Lifebelt, plus a Vurtz sound-box, can give a better all-round performance of a collection of records, old and new, vocal and instrumental, than the new H.M.V.; but that does not detract from my respect, and I may add my affection, for the new H.M.V. instrument.

At the same time, to suggest that people should look no further for an instrument to suit them would be ridiculous. Were we, for instance, to have a test in which I was to be allowed to choose the

records to be played, I should be prepared to offer as long odds against the H.M.V. winning that test as against any other instrument on the market. Never mind, the new H.M.V. machine will convert hundreds of people to the gramophone who have hitherto held out against it.

As I foreshadowed last month, there has been a great deal of delay in getting out the Lifebelts, so that as I write this I have not been able to benefit from the criticism of any of our readers. I have had an opportunity of testing more carefully my statement that on the new H.M.V. the Lifebelt improved vocal reproduction, and I am in a position to state quite definitely that it does. I am convinced that careful investigation in the principle of flexibility is well worth the attention of every gramophile with a taste for investigation. I forgot to mention last month that the combination of the Lifebelt with the Daws-Clarke needle-tension device is peculiarly good, and I recommend Lifebelters to try the effect.

To return to the subject with which I began this article, I hope that readers will not suspect me of petulance, but I must emphasise once more the tremendous difficulty I have to spare time to give them what I consider to be a representative opinion from the average man who owns a gramophone, and unless I feel I can be of some use I cannot afford to run the risk of neglecting my own work. In spite of the legend that exists of my tremendous facility, I can assure our readers that I have to work as hard as a blacksmith before I can hammer a sentence into shape. One of the musical papers, I forget which, took me to task a week or two ago for what I said about Bach's *Chaconne* and Debussy's *Nocturne* in these columns. I wish these good gentlemen who speak with the security of connoisseurs would realise that I do not claim to be a connoisseur myself. What I do claim is, that until recently musical criticism was, for the average man, mumbo-jumbo. I have never worshipped poet or painter for his name, and I don't intend in middle-age to start worshipping musicians for their names. I am perfectly willing to admit that my failure to appreciate (I *can* up to a point enjoy it) Bach's *Chaconne* is due to a defective musical education, but I maintain that the opinion that I expressed to this effect is more valuable to readers of this paper than a potted excerpt I had stolen from somebody else's opinion of Bach.

If in another two years I am able to write and claim that I can appreciate Bach's *Chaconne*, why, then, I shall feel justified in abusing any reader of this paper who refuses to take my word for it that he can appreciate it too. And that's what I feel about César Franck. And that's what half of you are—frightened by b—y ops—like the man in the train who had no use for them.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.





"PROMS."



# NOTES on SOME RECORDS of MUSIC by W. A. MOZART

Compiled by FRANCIS E. TERRY

(This is an attempt to review the music of Mozart—excluding operatic vocal numbers—so far as it is available to the gramophonist. I have tried to mention every recorded composition, but do not pretend to have noticed every individual record, and have omitted some “arranged” versions. The notes are intended chiefly to guide the gramphonist in forming his collection of records but partly also to assist appreciation. The introductory remarks aim principally at the latter objective. The records have (except in a few cases) been played with a combination consisting of Astra semi-permanent fibre needle, “Jewel” (Nomyka diaphragm) sound-box, H.M.V. tone-arm, and extra large H.M.V. external oak horn. The compositions are arranged, as far as possible, in chronological order. An asterisk preceding a paragraph indicates that both Goodwin & Tabb and Hawkes (Philharmonia) publish small scores; a dagger indicates that Goodwin & Tabb publish a small score. Scores of the trios are desirable possessions and quite cheap, though not published in miniature.)

## DATES ILLUSTRATIVE OF MOZART'S ENVIRONMENT.

(N.B.—Innovations often take some time in making themselves felt: Mozart's audiences would be rather less liberal and romantic than might appear from some of the dates given.)

- 1710. Invention of pianoforte (but only slowly comes into general use).
- 1715. Alessandro Scarlatti's “Tigrane.”
- 1723. J. S. Bach goes to Leipzig (beginning of his third period).
- 1741. Handel's “Messiah.”
- 1742. C. P. E. Bach's first collection of clavier sonatas.
- 1745. Stamitz appointed to lead Mannheim orchestra.
- 1750. Death of J. S. Bach. Gray's “Elegy.”
- 1752. Haydn's first string quartets (opera 1–3).
- 1756. Birth of Mozart.
- 1759. Death of Handel. Voltaire's “Candide.”
- 1760. Rousseau's “La Nouvelle Héloïse.”
- 1761. Haydn goes to Eisenstadt.
- 1762. Gluck's “Orfeo.”
- 1763. End of Seven Years' War.
- 1770. Birth of Beethoven. Death of Tartini.
- 1772. Haydn's “Farewell” Symphony.
- 1773. Death of Lord Chesterfield. Mozart finds and studies some string quartets of Haydn.
- 1774. Goethe's “Sorrows of Werther.”

- 1776. American Declaration of Independence.
- 1778. Gluck's “Iphigénie en Aulide” (Mozart in Paris). Deaths of Voltaire and Rousseau. Schiller's first drama written.
- 1781. Mozart's “Idomeneo.” Kant's “Critique of Pure Reason.”
- 1782. Death of Metastasio. Emperor Joseph II. publishes Edict of Toleration and other reforming measures.
- 1784. Beaumarchais' “Mariage de Figaro.” Chénier begins to write poems.
- 1785. Cowper's “Task.”
- 1786. Mozart's “Figaro.” Death of Frederick the Great.
- 1787. Reforms of Emperor Joseph II. prove unpopular.
- 1788. Mozart's three great symphonies. Haydn's “Oxford” Symphony. Deaths of Gluck and of C. P. E. Bach.
- 1789. Storming of the Bastille. Goethe's “Hermann und Dorothea.”
- 1790. Haydn's quartets opus 64. Belgium revolts from the Empire.
- 1791. Mozart's “Zauberflöte,” Requiem Mass, and death. Wordsworth visits France (see “Prelude” books ix to xi).
- 1795. Beethoven's pianoforte trios opus 1.
- 1797. Birth of Schubert.
- 1798. Beethoven begins string quartets, opus 18. A. W. v. Schlegel begins German translation of Shakespeare.
- 1809. Death of Haydn.

MOZART'S MATURITY.

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The eighteenth century may be roughly described as an interlude of rest between the turmoils which followed the break up of the middle ages and those which ushered in that nineteenth century system which is now in its turn dissolving around us: the greater part of Europe was dominated by monarchs who were obeyed rather as a protection against anarchy than as expressing any national aspirations of their subjects; certain formal observances and prudential maxims were venerated under the names of reason and good sense; and there was a general readiness to acquiesce in the established order of things. But in the latter part of the century ideas were breeding in drawing room and study which were soon to make themselves felt



in the assembly and the field. The appeal to reason, which had originally been an excuse for sceptical quiescence, became an incentive to the active extirpation of abuses. The private life and retired interests, to which men had devoted themselves as a refuge from the hazards of public activity, led, through the labyrinths of polite melancholy and the vagaries of refined sentimentalism, to a quickened sensibility, a more intimate exploration of the human heart, and a more passionate assertion of individual rights. Other factors, economic, scientific, and antiquarian, and not least that biological process, which, when it operates among the lower animals, we call "adaptation to environment," but dignify by the name of "progress" when it affects our own conduct, contributed to swell this liberal, romantic, nationalist movement of revolt. The conflict of the old and new spirit in the public affairs of Europe resulted in warfare and revolution over many years: the fusion of the same elements in the writings of three Viennese composers produced the most stimulating epoch in the history of music, and within that group the subject of this study is the composer in whose work these tendencies are most intimately combined: Haydn is more securely reasonable; Beethoven more deeply personal; Mozart, by his careful perfection of form and sincere utterance of spontaneous human emotions, stands between two ages and harmonises both: pious Catholic and enthusiastic Freemason, devoted servant of the Emperor, yet producing his best work outside the trammels of patronage, his life presents a similar contrast.

Mozart was born in 1756. His father, Leopold Mozart, was an eminent player and teacher of the violin, an industrious composer, and a very honest, affectionate, pious person; and was in the service of the Archbishop of Salzburg. The young Mozart early displayed remarkable abilities both in execution and in composition; during his youth the family made prolonged tours through the principal musical centres of Europe, where Mozart gave displays and recitals as an "infant prodigy"; owing, however, to the prudence of his father, and partly also to the innate graciousness of his own disposition, he was unspoilt either by the facility of his invention or by the admiration which he excited, but pursued his musical studies in a conscientious manner, and in this fashion was able to assimilate not only whatever was most notable in the music of that day, but also the more recondite science of the ancient masters of counterpoint. In 1772 a new Archbishop of Salzburg was elected, who proved an unsympathetic and exacting patron, and prevented the foreign tours from being continued; these conditions affected Mozart's spirits and the quality of his compositions; nor was this state of things improved by an un-

successful visit to Paris in 1778. At last, in 1781, Mozart was invited to compose the opera for the carnival at Munich; he seized the opportunity, put forward the whole of his genius, and produced "Idomeneo"; this work was of the highest excellence throughout, but especially in the originality and science displayed in the orchestration; it secured general recognition and marks the beginning of Mozart's maturity. A few months later Mozart broke with the Archbishop of Salzburg and settled in Vienna, where, with the exception of occasional visits to Berlin, Prague, and other musical centres, he remained for the rest of his life: here, during part of the time, he was nominally in the service of the Emperor; actually few of his works were written for the Emperor, and he was financially dependent partly upon the money paid by publishers and managers in respect of his compositions, but mainly upon what he could earn by playing and teaching the pianoforte, upon which instrument he was a generally admired performer. The principal new influence which entered into his life during this period was an increasing acquaintance with the works of J. S. Bach. The character of the compositions of his maturity may be gathered in a general way from such of them as have been gramophonically recorded and are hereinafter noted. There is an exception, however, in the case of his compositions for the pianoforte: these were written to be played by himself; competent critics have recorded the profound emotional effect which these compositions produced when Mozart played them, and this is perhaps the only fair basis upon which to judge them; they are generally of a clear, simple, and open character, admirably suited to the genius of the instrument, but contain passages which, under the hands of performers less intimately sympathetic than the composer, sometimes sound a little formal. The tendency of Mozart's development during this mature period can only be properly judged from the music itself, but may be roughly described as a movement towards a simpler and more deeply human style in melody and harmony, together with a more profound and organic use of counterpoint. His work continued to increase in depth and richness almost to the moment of his death in 1791: thus he died at about the same age as Beethoven commenced his second period.

His temperament was emotional and excessively sensitive, prone both to melancholy and to wild high spirits, easily moved to laughter and to tears; but he was saved from the egoism of morbid sensibility by innate nobility and a simple affectionate heart, which not only caused his temperament to express itself in forms generous rather than vicious, but also, by causing him to love and esteem his more prudent father, enabled him to some extent to lay to heart and profit by those principles of piety and right conduct which that excellent man strove to incul-



cate; and, in a crisis, he could behave with strength and dignity. His intellect was refined and judicious. His knowledge of the musical art was wide and scientific, grounded upon a just appreciation of the works of his predecessors; and his facility in the actual writing of music is to be attributed rather to a richly stored mind and a habit of continual mental composition than to any self-confident reliance upon unimproved natural gifts.

Mozart's music is "formal" in the best sense: on the one hand he strives, in each form, to bring out the values most proper to that form, and, on the other hand, he expresses his ideas in the forms most appropriate to the ideas in question. This is partly due to the extreme sensibility of his nature, too keenly appreciative of the genius of each form and each instrument willingly to do violence to it. Partly also it is due to his position in the history of music: Haydn had himself contributed to develop and establish the forms of instrumental music, and his industry, curiosity and whimsicality continued to shape and develop them in unexpected ways after they had reached the stage of what we consider the typical classic forms; Beethoven found a set of forms which had been elaborated by men of an earlier generation and of which the more obvious capabilities had been fully explored, and accordingly proceeded to turn them to new uses and charge them with new emotions, so that the new content often overflowed and sometimes seemed to break the vessels into which it was poured: Mozart grew up alongside of the "sonata" forms, and is eager to show the beauties which are naturally implicit in them. We must not accuse him of conventionality or obsequiousness to fashion: we know, for instance, that though recent events have made us see that the ideas and emotions centring round what is called "nationality" are, for us to-day, wicked and dangerous things made use of only by evil-disposed and malevolent persons to turn men from charity and civility to pride, hatred and mutual destruction, nevertheless for (say) Mazzini, the idea of nationality was a centre for emotions mainly of a humble, fraternal and charitable nature; in the same way we must realise that formal strictness, which to us savours rather of a text-book of musical appreciation, was for Mozart a natural way of expressing a pure spontaneous apprehension of beauty.

The following recorded works are recommended as illustrating Mozart's position in the history of music:

J. S. BACH and HANDEL.—The more important works of these composers had little immediate effect on the history of instrumental music; it was from their suites that subsequent composers derived their ideas of form; good examples of these are J. S. Bach's Suite for Flute and Strings in B minor (Columbia L.1557-8) and Handel's Water Music (Columbia L.1437-8); interesting

examples of the sort of movement from which the forms of single movements arose will be found in J. S. Bach's Allemande from First Partita (H.M.V., E.275—a simple example) and Prelude from Third English Suite (H.M.V., D.645—a more complicated example).

STAMITZ (1717-47).—Trio for Orchestra in F (Polydor 62434-5).

PUGNANI (born 1727).—Sonata (Vocalion K.05110 and K.05142).

J. HAYDN.—The best of Haydn's work (and the vast bulk of what has been recorded) was written after Haydn had come under Mozart's influence (the quartets opus 76 were written after Mozart's death); earlier recorded works are String Quartet in F, Op. 3 No. 5 (Polydor \*72791 and \*72793: also recorded by Columbia, L.1638-9, but not so well, in my opinion; this was one of the group with which Haydn first launched the classical string quartet on an admiring world) and "Farewell" Symphony in A (Polydor \*65782-4).

DITTERSDORF.—A contemporary of Haydn: two movements from string quartets (H.M.V., DA.174 and DB.238—these are on the backs of Mozart records and will therefore be mentioned hereunder).

Finally, I would specially recommend two books: first, Edward Holmes, "The Life of Mozart" (J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., "Everyman Library," 2s.); and secondly, H. C. Colles' "The Growth of Music, Part II. the Age of the Sonata, from C. P. E. Bach to Beethoven" (Oxford University Press, 3s. 6d.). Every gramophonist should possess a few books on music, for, as wise Mr. Stephen says: "I have bought me a gramophone, and needles, and records, and all; I lack nothing but a book to keep it by."

#### NOTES ON INDIVIDUAL WORKS.

K.216. *Violin Concerto No. 3 in G*.—This and the two works next to be mentioned are from a group of violin concertos written in Salzburg in 1776 for performance by the composer himself. This concerto has been played by Jelly d'Aranyi (orchestra conducted by Stanley Chapple) and recorded by Vocalion on five sides (A.0242-4). As this is better in every respect than either of its companion works, I shall describe it in some detail. The first movement occupies the first two sides: the orchestral introduction takes 37 bars; it begins with the first tune of the first subject (which I call "A"); at bar 11 begins another tune from the first subject, of a similar character (I call this "B"); then at bar 19 comes (in the tonic) a tune from the second subject (I call this "P"); at bar 26 comes (still in the tonic) another tune from the second subject (I call this "Q"); finally, bars 34 to 37 are founded on the last few bars of A and lead



straight into the full exposition by the soloist; this starts at bar 38 with A; at bar 48 the orchestra makes a short interruption with a variant of B; at bar 52 the soloist gives out a new tune (which I call "C") with rhythmic similarities to A, still as part of the first subject; bar 65 begins the second subject, the soloist giving out (in the dominant) a new tune (which I call "O") with rhythmic similarities to Q; P and Q are re-introduced (both in the dominant) at bars 75 and 82 respectively; at bar 95 B re-enters orchestrally and forms (bars 95 to 103) a link between the exposition and development; at this point comes the turn of the record; bars 104 to 154 comprise a very vigorous and beautiful development section, closely and organically linked with the rest of the movement; bars 153 to 155 form a link between the development and recapitulation and consist of the same variant of A as was heard at bar 34; the recapitulation begins at bar 157 and is very regular and in the tonic throughout; A enters at bar 157, B at bar 167, C at bar 170, O at bar 183, P at bar 193, and Q at bar 200; bars 213 to 217 (introducing the cadenza) are omitted; bars 218 to 227 form a coda founded on B: the reason why I have analysed this movement at some length is because it sounds most spontaneous and unpremeditated and I wish to show that Mozart obtains this effect by careful regularity of form. The second movement is a simple adagio in strict sonata form, and occupies the third side and the first half of the fourth side: the first subject is a single melody; the second subject is in two limbs (bars 10 and 14 respectively); the development starts at bar 20; recapitulation starts bar 29; the turn of the record comes (middle of bar 33) at the end of the first subject, which is played an octave higher; the second subject is given in the tonic; bars 45 and 46 (introducing the cadenza) are omitted; bars 47 to 51 form a coda founded on the first subject. The last movement is allegro and occupies the second half of the fourth side and the whole of the fifth side: bars 251 constitute a brisk, spontaneous rondo, organically knit together; the turn of the record comes in the middle of this, bars 133 to 140 being played both at the end of the fourth side and at the beginning of the fifth side; at bar 217 there is a very short cadenza; instead of the movement coming to a close at bar 250, there is a short pause, and then from bar 252 to 290 new matter is inserted in different tempo; the rondo is resumed from bar 291 to the end of the movement (bar 433); the cadenza marked at bar 377 is not played: this movement holds together very well and is an effective unit. Playing, conducting, recording and price of these records are all that could be desired. While at work on this note I was able to hear this concerto played at a recital by the same soloist and a chamber

orchestra, a remarkably fine performance, and I can assure gramophonists that, on my machine the records are only very slightly less effective than the original performance. The music is very charming, though (except for the development of the first movement) it never comes near to greatness. On the sixth side is a minuet from the Haffner Serenade (*infra*).

K.218. *Violin Concerto No. 5 in D*.—This concerto a little resembles the preceding, but is less symmetrically constructed and less effective. It has been played by Kreisler (orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald) and recorded by H.M.V. on eight sides (DB.815-8). The first movement occupies the first three sides: the first side (ending bar 108) contains the exposition, much on the same lines as in the first movement of the preceding concerto, namely, a shortened orchestral exposition followed by a fuller exposition by the soloist, but in this case the effect of the soloist's exposition is damped by the quantity of comparatively meaningless and inorganic ornamental passages; the second side (to bar 207) contains development and recapitulation rolled into one in a way which is curious rather than pleasing, again contains too much padding, and has nothing of the same force and interest as the development of the first movement of the preceding concerto; the third side gives the coda, including a long cadenza. The second movement is similar to the second movement of the preceding concerto except that there is no development and occupies the fourth and fifth sides; the turn comes at the end of the first subject in the recapitulation (end of bar 52); in the course of the fifth side Kreisler plays a not unattractive cadenza. The last movement is in the same form as that of the last movement of the preceding record except for the presence of a minuet-like *alternativo* which interrupts the rondo in several places; it occupies the sixth, seventh, and eighth sides; the sixth side starts with fifteen bars of the minuet-like *alternativo* (*andante gracioso* in two four); then comes the rondo proper (*allegro ma non troppo* in six eight), which continues to the end of the side; the *alternativo* is repeated at the beginning of the seventh side, and is followed by a resumption of the rondo, which continues for a while and is then succeeded by a section of new material (*andante gracioso* in common time), which is equivalent to the "new matter in different tempo" referred to in the last movement of the preceding concerto, and this continues to the end of the side; the eighth side starts with another repetition of the minuet-like *alternativo*; then follows a variant of the rondo; a cadenza is then played; the *alternativo* is repeated yet again; and the movement ends with another variant of the rondo; some of the details of this movement are attractive, but it is



not very coherent, and contains too much padding. This work is well played; the recording is in some respects technically superior to that of the preceding work; but the general effect is not so good. Musically, one feels that Mozart cynically set himself to obtain an effect of superficial brilliance.

†K.219. *Violin Concerto No. 6 in A*.—This concerto, which is rather more contemplative than the two others, has been played by Arthur Catterall (orchestra conducted by Hamilton Harty) and recorded by Columbia on eight sides (L.1592-5). The first movement occupies the first three sides: the exposition occupies the first side; the orchestra opens with the accompaniment to the first half of the first subject and then proceeds to the latter half of the second subject; then the soloist enters with an extraneous but touching adagio section, after which the whole of the first and second subjects are played; the second side contains the development (with some extraneous matter) and recapitulation (regular); the third side contains the coda and cadenza: this movement is rather loosely knit, but has a certain lazy charm and moments of beauty. The second movement, which is more symphonic and elaborate than the slow movements of the other two concertos, occupies the fourth and fifth sides: the fourth side contains an exposition of shortened forms of both subjects by the orchestra, followed by the full exposition by the soloist (first subject starting at bar 23, second subject at bar 37); the opening of the full version of the second subject shows a beautiful contrast between the matter given to the soloist and that given to the orchestra; the fifth side starts with the development (bar 63), the latter part of which contains some beautiful writing; the beginning of the recapitulation (at bar 86) sounds as if it were going to be treated fugally, but this is not done; the latter part of the first subject is beautifully varied; the second subject is regularly recapitulated; six bars of the coda (ending three bars from the end and containing the place for the cadenza) are omitted. This movement is closely knit and contains some beautiful passages, but the melody is sometimes a little facile. The last movement consists of a minuet and two trios (or *alternativi*) and occupies the sixth, seventh and eighth sides; the sixth side contains the minuet, first trio, and *da capo* repeat of the minuet; the seventh side contains the second trio (or rather *alternativo*, for it is itself in the nature of a scherzo and trio); the eighth side contains the cadenza and a repeat of the minuet; this movement is never more than attractive. This work is well played and conducted (though both might be more sympathetic) and fairly well recorded.

†K.250. *Haffner Serenade*.—Written in Salzburg 1776-7 for the wedding of the daughter of a prominent citizen. The eight movements are for various

combinations of instruments; the third movement is a minuet for solo violin, strings, flutes, bassoons and horns, and has been recorded by Vocalion on the odd side of the records of the Violin Concerto in G (*supra*), Jelly d'Aranyi playing the solo violin and Stanley Chapple conducting; all the usual repeats are observed; the scoring seems to be a little altered so as to give additional prominence to the solo violin; the playing is good; the music is beautiful, happy with a tinge of pathos.

K.251. *Divertimento (No. 11) in D* for strings, oboe and horn.—The very attractive first minuet has been well recorded by Polydor on a single side of a 10in. record (62309); on the back is a pleasant but effeminate scherzo by Spohr; this record can be recommended to those who like their music to be light but sensible. There is another record (\*65563) in the Polydor catalogue which is described both on the label and in the catalogue as the *Andantino* from this *divertimento*; it is an extremely pleasant record, but there seems to be a mistake somewhere, as it certainly is not the *Andantino* from this *divertimento*.

†K.V.Anhang 10. *Overture to les Petits Riens*.—Composed in the spring of 1778 in Paris. This is the overture to a set of ballet music. It has been recorded complete on a single side by Vox (\*01734). This overture is simple but irregular in form, slight in material and treatment, vivacious and attractive but rather trifling in mood (distinctly good of its kind) and has been decently recorded. This music was only discovered in 1872, which is the reason for its Köchel number being out of series.

K.299. *Concerto for Harp and Flute*.—Written in Paris in 1778 for two amateurs, a certain Duc de Guisnes (flute) and his daughter (harp). The duke engaged Mozart to teach his daughter composition, saying, "I do not wish her to write any operas, airs, concertos or symphonies, but merely grand sonatas for her instrument, as I do for mine." Mozart has here proved successful in composing what was demanded of him, attractive music for rather superficial amateurs, sounding more difficult than it is, and avoiding vulgarity without achieving distinction or making any intellectual demands. It may be noted that these were the two instruments for which Mozart cared least. The first movement has been recorded by H.M.V. on a single side (D.476); the movement is considerably cut by the omission of the sections for orchestra alone and also some passages for the solo instruments; the accompaniment is relegated to a piano, which sometimes causes confusion by its resemblance to the harp; the flute is attractively played by John Lemmoné, and fairly well recorded.

K.331. *Sonata for Pianoforte in A*.—This is one of the most popular of the pianoforte sonatas. The first movement is an air and variations; the



very beautiful air may be considered as the archetypal "air for pianoforte variations"; the variations are affecting and emotional without failing to be simply and clearly founded upon the melody, and are extremely pianistic. This movement has been played by Rachmaninoff and "re-produced" by Edison (82197): the air is played (without repeats), then the rather formal first variation (without repeats), then the profoundly beautiful fifth variation (without repeats) and finally the sixth variation (first repeat observed): the playing is excellent, very expressive, perhaps a little on the "strong" side; the recording seems also to be unusually good; an adapter is, of course, necessary in order to play this record on an ordinary gramophone. The second movement, a minuet of almost mystical loveliness, has not been recorded. The third and last movement is the well-known *alla turca*, which can be so dull when badly played; it has, however, been extremely well played by Eugene d'Albert and remarkably well recorded by Polydor (\*65577); all repeats are observed and there are no cuts: this is a most brilliant and perfect performance, and I should be very much surprised if a better pianoforte record has ever been made; I strongly recommend it, though it should be borne in mind that it is, emotionally, merely a vigorous last movement.

†K.334. *Divertimento (No. 17) in D for Strings and Horns*.—The first minuet has been described as "celebrated" and is rather dull. It has been conducted by Sir Landon Ronald and recorded by H.M.V. on the back of the "Marriage of Figaro" Overture (*infra*); the recording is good, but the conducting extremely dull. It has also been recorded by Polydor on a single side of a 10in. record (62347); the recording is not quite so good, but the interpretation is decidedly better (though still the result is a little on the dull side); on the back is the minuet from Schubert's Octette, which is quite pleasant. There are several recordings of transcriptions of this minuet; but these fall outside the scope of this article.

†K.370. *Quartet for Oboe and Strings*.—Composed in Munich, 1779–1780, when Mozart was there for the production of "Idomeneo." The orchestra assembled for the production of "Idomeneo" contained many very able and sympathetic players, who received Mozart's composition with delight; among them was Ramm, the oboist, whom Mozart describes as "a true German, his face does in such a manner express everything that he thinks," and who said to Mozart after a rehearsal, "I must own that I never yet heard any music that made such an impression upon me, and I assure you that I have thought of your father fifty times at least, and of the delight that he will have in hearing this opera." It was for this musician and in these circumstances that this quartet was composed; it is quite slight,

but obviously intended for a musician and not for a mere amateur nobleman. It has been superbly played by Léon Goossens and members of the Spencer Dyke Quartet and superbly recorded by the N.G.S. on five sides of 10in. records (Q, R, and S). The first movement, which is perhaps the least interesting, occupies the first two sides, the turn of the record occurring at the end of the exposition section; the semi-fugal opening of the development section is particularly impressive. The second movement is short, informed with a deep but transparent and limpid poignancy, and occupies the third side. The third movement is a rondo and occupies the fourth and fifth sides, the turn of the record occurring at the beginning of bar 90; it is an extraordinary portrayal of pure happiness; in form it has some superficial resemblances with the last movements of the violin concertos, but succeeds in giving an impression of unity and sincerity (just the points in which the violin concertos seem to fail); its happy bucolic spirit is reinforced by passages of a pentatonic character. The sixth side is very satisfactorily devoted to the Sinfonia from the Cantata number 156 of J. S. Bach.

†K.375. *Serenade for Two Horns, Two Oboes, Two Clarinets and Two Bassoons in E flat*.—Composed October, 1781 (shortly after Mozart's establishment in Vienna, but the two oboes were added to the score in the following summer). This serenade was (at least in its revised form) intended for performance at a series of informal open air concerts; Holmes, in his life of Mozart, describes Mozart's compositions for these concerts as "at once light and ariose—somewhat between the symphony and the dance, but calculated to give elegance and tenderness of sentiment to the promenaders"; that is to say, they are the ideal music for refined garden parties: the writing for the wind instruments is exquisite. This serenade has been recorded by Vox on three double-sided records (\*06210–2). The first movement occupies the first side; it is in a sort of sonata form (without a proper development): only the recapitulation is played (starting at bar 113) and a short passage near the end is omitted (bars 211 to 229); these are the only cuts in the entire work and are comparatively innocent; the interest is very evenly divided between the instruments. The second movement is a rather conventional minuet and less conventional trio, and occupies the second side; all the usual repeats are observed except that of the second section of the trio. The third movement is a graceful adagio and occupies the third and fourth sides, the turn of the record occurring at bar 145, immediately before the recapitulation of the first subject. The fourth movement is another minuet (this time of a rather more original character) and trio and occupies the fifth side; all the usual



repeats are observed except that of the second section of the trio. The fifth movement occupies the sixth side (repeat at bar 9 observed); it is brisk and jovial with a certain archaic simplicity at times. This work is well played and recorded, suitable for performance out of doors, and can be recommended particularly to those who enjoy the records of Handel's Water Music and Bach's Suite for Flute and Strings in B minor; Mozart's finest and greatest qualities would be out of place in a work of this sort, but it is extremely pleasant in a thoroughly musicianly manner; it is also a splendid study in the qualities of the different wind instruments.

\*K.384. *Overture to Il Seraglio* (aliter *Die Entführung*).—This opera was composed, by the suggestion of the Emperor, in 1781-2, shortly after Mozart's establishment in Vienna, and tells how an Italian, Belmont, rescued his mistress, Costanza, from the harem of the Grand Turk. Mozart was at this time engaged to Constance Weber, whom he married soon after, and this circumstance is said by the critics to have given additional life to the love-music in the opera. The overture consists of an exposition section (presto) depicting the Turkish element in the opera, a very beautiful middle section (andante) founded on Belmont's first aria and depicting the amorous element in the opera, and a recapitulation of the presto section. This beautiful overture has been conducted by Dr. Weissmann and recorded on a single side by Parlophone (E.10273); playing and recording are both very good; owing to the fact that the overture as written leads straight on to Belmont's aria, the part subsequent to bar 230 has been omitted and a few bars of coda substituted; there is no cutting in the ordinary sense of the word. On the back is the overture to "Die Lustige Krieg" by Johann Strauss.

\*K.387. *String Quartet (No. 12) in G*.—Completed 31st December, 1782. This quartet is brilliant and shining. The first movement has been played by the Catterall Quartet and recorded by H.M.V. (D.560) on a single side; the greater part of the development is cut (bars 56 to 100); the music is strongly composed, symmetrically arranged, founded on detached phrases of little melodic significance, and rather lacking in sweetness; these qualities are perhaps exaggerated by the vigorous, rather harsh playing; apart from this, playing and recording are excellent. The second movement (minuet) has not been recorded. The third movement (andante cantabile) has been played by the Lener Quartet and recorded by Columbia (L.1530) on a single side (the other side being an attractive but cut version of the slow movement of the Debussy Quartet); it consists of an exposition and recapitulation linked by a bridge passage of three bars; only the recapitulation (starting at

bar 51) is played; the music is beautiful and interesting, with a lyrical quality and pure, rather spiritual feeling; the playing is sympathetic, the recording good in general, but some beautiful interweaving of the voices is rendered almost inaudible by the undue prominence of the first violin. The fourth movement has been played by the Flonzaley Quartet and recorded by H.M.V. (DB.252) and also played by the Lener Quartet and recorded by Columbia (L.1460), in each case without cuts and on a single side: the music sums up the special qualities of this quartet; it is a remarkable combination of fugal and sonata form; vigour is blended with a spiritual tenderness, awe and happiness: the Flonzaley rendering is very clear and vigorous, with great virtuosity and an almost perfect balance of parts, and is remarkably well recorded, but the subtler emotional qualities are not adequately conveyed; on the other side is a splendid uncut movement from Schumann: the Lener rendering (which is a re-recording) is emotionally rather more sympathetic, but the balance of parts is not so clear nor the recording so good (the original recording was better in every way except that it wore badly); on the back is an attractive but much cut rendering of the slow movement from Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" Quartet.

K.397. *Fantasia for Pianoforte in D minor*.—Composed 1782. This slight but effective piece has been recorded on a single side by the Anglo-French Music Company (2066); there are no cuts, but none of the repeats are observed; the playing is clear but inexpressive and unsympathetic, and sometimes too hurried. The piece consists of (a) a very short andante introduction consisting of arpeggios; (b) an adagio movement consisting of a quiet and attractive piece of melody alternating with a more excited little section and a scale passage; (c) an allegretto movement consisting of a simple Mozartian melody in two strains, a rather more conventional melody, a scale passage, and a recapitulation of the first melody. The writing is deft and attractive, covering a wide range of emotions in short space and by simple means; but in this short space it is difficult to bring out the different emotions with proper effect; the interpretative genius of Mozart may have succeeded in doing this; but the playing of this record is distinctly un-Mozartian, especially in the absence of "singing" quality in the playing of the melodies.

\*K.421. *String Quartet (No. 13) in D minor*.—Composed June, 1783, in the bedroom of the composer's wife during a confinement. This quartet is best described as a simple but passionate pastoral. It has been played by the Kutcher Quartet and recorded by Vocalion (K.05190-3). The exposition (repeated) of the first movement occupies the first side and the rest of the first movement occupies the



second side. The second movement (andante) is a sort of compromise between sonata form, song form and a set of variations and occupies the third and fourth sides, the break occurring (at the rest in bar 42) at the beginning of the last sentence of the quasi-development; none of the repeats are observed; the profound effect of this movement is due to the use of conventionally simple melodies to which a fine emotional edge is given by modulation and other rhetorical devices. The third movement (minuet and trio, all repeats observed) occupies the fifth side and is better played than the other movements; the minuet is unusually emotional. The last movement (allegro ma non troppo) is a set of variations and is typical of this quartet and occupies the sixth and seventh sides: the repeats observed are the first section of the air (bar 8), first section of first variation (bar 32), first section of second variation (bar 56), both sections of third variation (bars 80 and 96) and first section of fourth variation (bar 112); the break occurs at the end of the second variation (bar 72): this movement is notable for a fine blend of melody and rhetoric. The playing is careful and sincere, but rather deficient in melodic feeling, and there is a tendency to give too much weight to merely transitional and ornamental passages; this causes a certain amount of distortion of the general effect and makes the interpretation rather un-Mozartian; the recording is generally very clear, but is not uniformly good, and the tone is not pleasing. The last movement has also been played by the Flonzaley Quartet and the Lener Quartet and recorded by H.M.V. (D.B.251) and Columbia (L.1520) respectively, in each case on a single side: the Flonzaley version is very fine, wonderfully played and recorded: the Lener version is also very good and as an interpretation of the music is perhaps the best; I believe that it has a repeat and a cut, but have not verified this: the Kutcher version is not so good as either of these, considered as snippets, but in good keeping with the rest of the quartet. The first and second movements have also been played by the L.S.Q. and recorded by Columbia (D.1427) on a 10in. record, each movement on one side; the cutting is so vile and extensive as not to be worth indicating, and the recording is not very good; in spite of this the record is worth possessing because the L.S.Q.'s sense of melody is a valuable corrective of the Kutcher Quartet's interpretation. The minuet has also been played by the Elman Quartet, the Catterall Quartet and the Wendling Quartet; the first two of these versions have been recorded by H.M.V. (D.A.174 and D.630 respectively) and the Wendling version has been recorded by Polydor (62298); the Elman and Catterall versions are both good and well recorded, but neither is very definitely superior to the Kutcher version; the Wendling

version is perhaps the best of all as regards interpretation and is clearly recorded, but the tone is not very good: on the back of the Elman record is a very interesting, uncut and rather attractive allegro from Dittersdorf's Quartet in E flat, a small score of which is published by Philharmonia; on the back of the Wendling record is a minuet of Haydn (from Quartet, Op. 76, No. 4) in his best manner, of which, I believe, this is the only record obtainable.

\*K.428. *String Quartet (No. 14) in E flat.*—Composed June or July, 1783. This quartet is contemplative in character and distinguished by a deep and tranquil happiness. It has been played by the old L.S.Q. and recorded by Columbia on two records (L.1043-4), each movement occupying one side. The first movement is quiet and broad and extremely beautiful; the development and first few bars of the recapitulation (bars 69 to 112) are cut; the playing is good but inclined to be a little pedestrian. The second movement (andante con moto) is in sonata form, but only the exposition is played here (to bar 35), giving the effect of a brief meditation, with little sense of incompleteness; it is sympathetically played. The minuet and trio are played without repeats except the usual da capo; this movement is well played, in good keeping, but not conspicuous. The last movement is a compromise between sonata and rondo form, and the omission of repeats together with a cut (bars 237 to 319) bring it very close to sonata form; the cut is singularly innocuous; it is excellently played and gaiety and emotion, strength and sensibility are intimately combined. The recording of these records is of a good average quality, and their unostentatious beauty deserves wider recognition than it has received. The minuet has also been played by the Elman Quartet and recorded by H.M.V. (D.B.238) and also played by the Kutcher Quartet and recorded on the eighth side of the Vocalion recording of the D minor Quartet (*supra*); both records (particularly the Elman) are more clearly recorded than the L.S.Q. records, but the interpretation is not so good; I positively dislike the Elman interpretation: the attractive Dittersdorf andante on the back of the Elman record is stated to be from his Quartet in G, but is not from the quartet in that key published in the Philharmonia series of small scores.

K.458. *String Quartet No. 15 in B flat.*—Composed November, 1784. This quartet, which is sometimes called the "Hunt Quartet," has a happy rather open-air character in which a tendency to joviality is tempered by fancy. It has been played by the Lener Quartet and recorded by Columbia on three double-sided records (L.1606-8) uncut. The first movement occupies the first two sides, the turn of the record being at the end of the exposition section, which is repeated; the playing is good and



lively; if a loud needle is used the first subject may sound a little heavy, but this can easily be avoided. The second movement is a rather masculine minuet and lighter trio and occupies the third side, all the usual repeats being observed. The third movement is a simple adagio, pervaded by translucent fantastic melancholy and containing some attractive part-writing, and occupies the fourth and fifth sides; it is in quasi-sonata form (without development section) and the turn of the record occurs immediately before the recapitulation; the playing is sympathetic. The last movement somewhat resembles the first in feeling, but is lighter and more rapid; it occupies the sixth side; it is in sonata form; the exposition is not repeated. The recording of these records is excellent, the balance being unusually good. The quartet has also been played by the old L.S.Q. and recorded by Columbia on two records (L.1330-1), each movement occupying one side: the first movement is cut from about half a dozen bars after the beginning of the recapitulation to the final cadence (this is particularly deplorable owing to the fact that the development section is rather a contrasted middle-section than a development of the normal type); in the third movement the entire recapitulation is cut except the final bars; there is a substantial cut in the recapitulation of the fourth movement: the interpretation is singularly true and pure, though perhaps not quite so interesting as that of the Lener Quartet. The quartet has also been recorded by Polydor on two 10in. records of their cheapest class (14338-9), each movement occupying one side: the first movement is cut in much the same way as in the L.S.Q. version; only the recapitulation of the third movement is played; most of the recapitulation of the fourth movement is omitted: the playing is somewhat crude and unsympathetic and is usually too fast; the recording is rather poor; but the records are very cheap. The minuet has been very well played by the Wendling Quartet and fairly well recorded by Polydor on a single side of a 10in. record (62299); on the back is a good minuet by Haydn (from the Quartet, op. 64, No. 4) which is not, I believe, obtainable elsewhere.

K.465. *String Quartet (No. 17) in C major*.—Composed January, 1785. This quartet perhaps gives a greater impression of ease, sanity and maturity than any of the others, the various technical and emotional gifts of the composer being here blended with a view rather to perfection than to excitement; and it may be compared to a Raffael. It has been played without cuts by the Lener Quartet and recorded by Columbia on four records (L.1545-8). The first movement is preceded by an adagio introduction comparable in mood and technique with the far longer introduction to Beethoven's Quartet in C sharp minor (Op. 131);

the first eight bars consist of a theme played slowly by the viola and second and first violins in canon, the entries being only a crotchet apart (there is a simple accompaniment on the violoncello); the unorthodox harmonies which are produced by this close point of imitation have led to much dispute among the learned, and the dispute has recently been revived by Mr. Ernest Newman; the gramophone, however, can as yet throw little light on the merits of this dispute as the first violin is so preponderant in this record that the effect of the canon is largely lost and one hears a clear and beautiful phrase for the first violin rising above the rather indistinct sound of the other instruments; this is a very great pity. The enunciation section of the first movement concludes the first side and is not repeated; the first subject has a rather spiritual loveliness and the second subject is very carefully chosen so as to present just sufficient but not too much contrast; the rest of the first movement occupies the second side; the effect of some beautiful interweaving of the voices is lost through the preponderance of the first violin. The second movement, which begins with a beautiful melody, occupies the two sides of the second record and is in the same "quasi-sonata" form as the slow movement of the Quartet in G (*supra*), to which it bears a good deal of resemblance; the recapitulation, which is somewhat elaborated, begins a dozen bars before the end of the first side. The third movement occupies the third record, the first side comprising an attractive minuet (with repeats) and the second side a particularly lovely trio (with repeats) and the usual repeat of the minuet da capo; an unusually glaring instance of the undue prominence of the first violin is found in the last dozen bars of the trio, where the principal tune is given to the violoncello, but is practically inaudible in this record. The last movement seems to me just a little disappointing, though it contains attractive themes forcefully worked out; one would almost say that it was a Haydnish movement only partially transmuted into Mozart: the first side contains the enunciation section (repeated); the second side contains development, recapitulation and coda. In spirit this beautiful work may perhaps be compared to the Symphony in E flat (*infra*). The playing is fine and most sympathetic, but for the appalling predominance of the first violin, which is probably the fault rather of the recording than of the playing.

K.486. *Impresario* (aliter *Schauspieldirekter*) *Overture*.—This is the overture to an operetta composed in February, 1786. It is attractive, but not very important, and is thrown in as a make-weight with the H.M.V. version of the "Jupiter" Symphony (*infra*) and is also given on the back of the Parlophone record of the "Cosi Fan Tutti" Overture (*infra*). Despite its short length, this piece has all the



sections of a first movement in sonata form (there are no repeats in either version). The H.M.V. version is decidedly the better.

\*K.492. *Marriage of Figaro Overture* (aliter *Nozze di Figaro* and *Figaros Hochzeit*).—The opera was completed in April, 1786. The overture has no formal connection with the opera, but resembles it in the fidelity with which it adheres to the mood of a certain type of comedy, at once witty and sentimental, robust and tender, and achieving a fine harmonious unity of effect. This overture is in modified sonata form, that is to say, with no real development section; the second subject contains two quite distinct "tunes." The piece is mainly a valuable and truly musical display of orchestral brilliance. I choose three records for special mention. The recent H.M.V. record (D.1005) of Sir Landon Ronald and the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra is technically superb; the balance of the instruments and clearness with which they can all be heard is beyond praise; the tone both of the separate instruments and of the ensemble is also very good; but the interpretation is vile—it is pedestrian, monotonous and intensely dull; I recommend it to the man whose sole interest is in accurate and successful reproduction, but I warn all others against it. The very old H.M.V. record (D.815—in the "No. 2 List") of Nikisch and the London Symphony Orchestra may be described as the absolute reverse of the above: the interpretation is stimulating, noble and extremely brilliant, and is "original" in the best sense (though one sometimes gets the impression that the conductor is impressing his own personality on the work a little too much); the vigour and sense of colour is miraculous, particularly in the coda: but the recording is faulty; the principal (though not the only) fault is that the wood-wind is so predominant that the strings can at times scarcely be heard—but this fault is on the right side and can be mitigated to some extent by the use of a not too sensitive small diameter sound-box: to the connoisseur and anyone who finds this overture dull and hackneyed this record is certainly to be recommended, if he is willing to supplement and correct it by the use of his imagination; but I hesitate to recommend it to the average gramophonist. The Vocalion record (D.02122) is conducted by Mr. Percy Fletcher and is a most successful compromise between the qualities of the two versions above-mentioned; it is a thoroughly good piece of recording and the interpretation is intelligent, sympathetic and effective; it is not quite so brilliant as the Nikisch version (though vigorous enough where vigour is required), but surpasses it in delicacy in some passages (notably in a very lovely rendering of the first "tune" of the second subject) and is free from any tendency to impose the personality of the conductor on that of the composer; I have

no hesitation in recommending as quite the best all-round version. The Landon Ronald version is backed by the minuet from the *Divertimento* (No. 17) in D (*supra*); the Nikisch version is backed by the third and last side of that conductor's rendering of Liszt's *First Hungarian Rhapsody* and seems to me (but I am completely ignorant of Liszt) a splendid piece of recording; the Vocalion record is backed by a quite attractive Slavonic Dance by Dvorák. Since writing the above, I have had an opportunity of playing carefully against other records one of the records of this overture in the Polydor catalogue (\*65861); the recording is very true and nearly (though not quite) as clear as that of the Vocalion record, while its interpretation sounds more authentic and sympathetic; on the back is a most attractive rendering of Smetana's "*Bartered Bride*" Overture. I have also considered the following records, Polydor \*65511, Columbia L.1115, and Parlophone E.10111, and find them inferior to any of the records which I have discussed above.

*Sarabande from Act III. of the Marriage of Figaro*.—Taken from its place in the opera, this little dance sounds rather dull; it has a certain prettiness which should make it popular in Bloomsbury. It has been conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham and recorded by Columbia (L.1227) on the same side with a minuet by Lulli, which, considered simply as a piece of dance music, seems to be a better thing; on the back is the minuet from Bizet's "*Fair Maid of Perth*."

F. E. T.

(To be concluded.)



### Gramophone Tips

Those who have not already got Captain H. T. Barnett's "*Gramophone Tips*," the shilling booklet which is obtainable from this office or from any of Messrs. W. H. Smith's bookstalls, or through any local dealer or newsagent, should not wait, but get a copy at once. There will be no 1926 edition. Captain Barnett writes: "It will be quite unnecessary to rewrite the book this year. Much has happened in the past year to confirm the opinions stated and the advice given in my little book, and nothing whatever has come forward to necessitate a reversal or even a modification of a single word written in it; but if you will spare me the space in your next number for a few notes regarding gramophones and their accessories and records of special merit or use produced during the twelve months past, those of your readers who are interested in my views will like to have '*Gramophone Tips*' brought entirely up to date with these additions."

The space can well be spared for such an excellent purpose.



# JOAN OF ARC

Regal G8459-60-61 (3 10-in. records, 7/6), by Marsden Colliery Band.

Regal G8462-3 (2 10-in. records, 5/-), by St. Hilda Colliery Band.

Winner 4289 (10-in., 2/6), by Black Dyke Mills Band.

Zono 2622 (10-in., 2/6), by Horwich R.M.I. Band.

Full Score—R. Smith & Co. Ltd., 210 Strand, London (4/-).

FOR the eighth consecutive contest at Crystal Palace the test piece in the senior section has been a composition specially written for the purpose. *Joan of Arc* is a very worthy successor to the previous original works and is in many ways the most attractive music of them all.

The overture opens without introduction, the first subject, which is march-like in character and marked *non troppo allegro pomposo*, being announced in the repiano in the first bar. After a short development the second subject, marked *molto marc.*, led by the trombones and accompanied by trills on the soprano and solo cornet, enters at fig. 4. Quite a new theme, marked *andante con moto*, opens at fig. 9 with a flugel solo; this is worked out intricately and at some length and leads up to an *allegro con prima* at fig. 15, which is a virile and sprightly subject treated fugally and introduced by a very delicate passage, marked *poco scherzando*, for muted solo cornet and to which reply is made by the repianos, also muted, and the baritones. This, in development, contains references to the opening and other earlier themes, and with increasing sonority leads to a section in 9/8 time, marked *maestoso più lento* (fig. 27), much of which is written in triplets and which in turn is developed, and getting gradually louder and faster, leads to the final *allegro* at fig. 32.

The composer doubtless has some programme in his mind, but it is evidently more one of character than any attempt at actuality. Serenity and simplicity are sharply contrasted with grandeur which at times amounts to pomposity. The character of Joan was, of course, one of extreme simplicity until she was fired with the intense and patriotic desire to save her native land, and to the end of her short but glorious life she always seems to have been ready and anxious to return to her native simplicity as soon as her self-appointed mission could be brought to success. Such a character can be imagined quite well from this music, though I think one could see an equally convincing likeness to many another heroine or martyr. The music is quite good enough to stand on its own intrinsic merits without any programme at all. Though, perhaps, in some ways not the most difficult technically of recent Crystal Palace test pieces, this work is a real test in that every instrument has a well-balanced and well-written part, all of which are sufficiently difficult to put the most experienced players on their mettle, and it will be particularly pleasing to brass band

lovers to note what an important and interesting part has been written for the Cinderella of the band—the flugel. This music is very refreshing and, unlike some test pieces, will well bear inclusion in concert programmes, for it is tuneful, musically in spirit, and is not strung together in haphazard fashion, but moulded in a well-defined form. Moreover—and perhaps this is the biggest value of all in the brass band world to-day—it is a piece that cannot be rattled off in four square time and careless fashion, but demands intelligent and careful treatment by the conductor.

Two complete recordings and two cut versions—the latter of which each occupies the two sides of a 10-in. disc—have been published. Of the two complete issues the one played by Marsden Colliery Band (the winners) occupies five sides as against four in that by St. Hilda Colliery Band, which is largely accounted for by the faster tempo adopted by the latter band in the fugal section. In the Marsden record the balance is not as good as it might be, the solo cornets being rather too prominent; the long experience in recording of St. Hilda's men stands them in good stead here, for little fault can be found with the balance in their records. The interpretation of this band is brisker and more vivid than that of their rivals, and, personally, I prefer their faster tempo in the fugal section. On the whole I think the St. Hilda version is the better of the two, though their playing is not quite as light and delicate as that of the Marsden Band in the parts where delicacy is called for.

The breaks in the records are as follows:—St. Hilda Colliery Band: (1) page 11, bar 4; (2) page 19, bar 2; (3) page 35, bar 1. Marsden Colliery Band: (1) page 11, bar 4; (2) page 18, bar 4; (3) page 27, bar 8; (4) page 36, bar 4.

Of the two cut versions that by Black Dyke Band is very straightforward, there being merely one huge cut—of about half the piece—in the middle. (Side 1 is from the beginning to page 14, bar 2, without cut, and side 2 from page 34, bar 3, to the end, without cut.) I like this band's reading of the music the best and the playing is very crisp and firm, but the solo cornet is again a little too prominent for perfect balance. The Horwich record, *qua* record, is probably the best of all, and the playing is light-handed and yet firm, but the continuity and natural progression of the music is rather spoilt by the cuts, which are numerous but short except that the whole of the fugal section is omitted. For this reason, and in spite of the knowledge that had Horwich been allowed to record the piece in full I should probably have liked their version the best of the four, the Black Dyke record must be recommended to those who only want to invest half a crown.

W. A. C.



# CREDE EXPERTO

## A Current Survey of Gramophone Progress

### By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

#### II.—CONSTRUCTIONAL DETAILS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MOTORS.

OUR reports on gramophones will deal with constructional details as well as with the quality of the reproduction. The latter, of course, will be our main concern. Each instrument will be tested on various types of record both with steel needles of various kinds and with fibre needles. Separate records will be kept for use with fibre needles and every care will be taken to ensure that machines are not tested with worn records. If we find that the particular sound-box supplied with the machine fails on any particular type of record, we shall try the effect of other sound-boxes of standard make and see whether some improvement cannot be obtained in that way.

We shall, however, give as full particulars as possible of the construction of the instruments. It is not by any means an uncommon experience for instruments to develop faults within a very short time. As a rule, we fancy, the faults are largely due to insufficient care and even to positive ill-treatment. It is very tempting to blame the poor machine for our own delinquencies. Even so, quite a number of troubles are due to faults of construction which only become apparent after a month or two's use. As a beginning we have tried to classify the features which are important on the constructional side. Our list is probably not exhaustive, but we do not think we have omitted anything of great importance. From time to time we propose to indicate in greater detail how these features affect reproduction.

*Motor.*—Reserve of power; steadiness of running or governing; silence in operation; even running of turntable; durability and accessibility of parts.

*Sound-box.*—Size; weight; material of various parts; diaphragm; stylus mounting and method of tensioning.

*Tone-arm.*—Length, size, and shape; angle of taper; material; solidity of construction; absence of looseness or rattle in joints; freedom of required movements; needle-track alignment; vertical position of sound-box and needle angle; pressure upon record with sound-box and needle in playing position.

*Amplifier.*—Material, shape, and thickness; manner of fixing; solidity of elbow connection to tone-arm; absence of looseness at joints; state of strain or otherwise.

*Cabinet Work.*—Material; solidity; design and appearance.

There are probably more gramophone troubles due to faulty motors than to any other cause. All the energy which we appreciate as sound when we play our gramophones is derived from the motor via the record. The motor not only has to be capable of giving up the required amount of energy but it has to be able to do it at the proper rate, which is not a constant rate but a varying one. Unless it has a reserve of power, a substantial moment of momentum (flywheel action), and a quick governing action, the speed suffers and with it the pitch of the sounds reproduced. Nothing is more distressing than a gramophone which wobbles in pitch. Unfortunately, several of the best-known makes of motor are unsatisfactory in this respect. For a time they may give excellent results, but before long they begin to "hunt"—"chug, chug, chug"—and then the trouble begins. The Garrard No. 1A used to be very liable to go wrong in this way, but we believe that some improvement has been made in later models. The H.M.V. motors have always been remarkably steady in running and if once they have got out of order it is usually possible to adjust them to a fine degree of accuracy. It is perhaps significant that H.M.V. motors have larger governor balls than most other makes. It should, however, be remarked that the reserve of power in H.M.V. motors is not very substantial. This is due to the fact that they are worm-driven; worms do not, as a rule, wear so quickly as pinion trains but they absorb a lot more power. Another feature of H.M.V. motors is that the governor worm-wheel is made entirely of metal; accurate adjustment is therefore necessary to ensure silence in operation, but a metal worm-wheel, if properly designed and adjusted, is much more reliable and durable than a fibre wheel.

Of the motors which can be bought independently probably the most trustworthy are the Thorens 7, 8, 9, and 20, particularly the latter, and the Paillard G.G.R. The Collaro motors are beautiful pieces of workmanship and the smaller models seem to do their work fairly well. The larger one, which has a direct worm drive, we have not found to be entirely satisfactory; it is too sluggish in action, and seems to have little or no reserve of power.

Silence in operation, desirable though it is, is of much less importance than steadiness of running.



If one has to choose between the two, a steady "G-r-r-r" is much to be preferred to a less audible but more unsteady "Chug-chug". Sometimes a motor may be noisy when running free and practically silent when it has work to do. After a time every motor becomes more noisy owing to the wearing of the moving parts and bearings. In this connection the Collaro Company have given a commendable lead to other manufacturers; all their bearings are bushed and easily accessible, so that a faulty part can be readily replaced.

We propose to deal more fully with questions of motor design and upkeep in a future article. But there are three points which we think it well to mention now:—

1. It is advisable not to use the motor to its full capacity; three-quarter wound to one-quarter wound is a good rule; what this means in the number of records the motor can play can only be found by trial.

2. It is a good plan to let the motor run down nearly, but not quite, to the bottom after playing; this tends to preserve the temper of the springs. If you run it quite to the bottom or wind it quite to the top there is a danger that the spring will come unfastened and in any event some of the grease will probably be forced out of the spring barrels.

3. The bearings and the governor plate against which the governor brake presses should be frequently oiled with light, non-sticky oil, and not with vaseline or heavy grease. "Three-in-One" oil is very good for this purpose.

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### III.—H.M.V., MODELS 25 (HORN) AND 27 (SCHOOL).

In view of the remarks in our first article concerning the virtues of external horn machines we have thought it well that our first report should deal with a standard instrument of that type. For this purpose we have coupled together H.M.V. Models 25 and 27, since their principles of construction are almost identical. Both models are fitted, as a standard, with sheet-iron horns of the flower or petalled type built up by seaming sections together. The horns are about 2 feet long with a bell of nearly 2 feet. No. 25 has a quadruple spring motor—probably the finest in existence—whilst No. 27 has a double-spring motor of not dissimilar pattern. No. 25 is supplied with an Exhibition sound-box and is sold at £8 10s. (oak) or £9 (mahogany). No. 27 is in the form of a cabinet of rather cheap design and material, is fitted with a No. 2 sound-box, and costs £12. The tone-arm in both cases is beautifully made of stout drawn brass and is of the short goose-neck variety. Owing to the length of the tone-arm the needle-track

alignment is rather better than has been usual with H.M.V. machines, but it still leaves a good deal to be desired. We note that in the new "No. 4" models which the Gramophone Co. have just put on the market this question has received the attention which it deserves. We hope that this sign of grace will appear in their horn models as well.

Both machines have a strong forward tone, of ample volume for the majority of listeners, even when fibre needles are used. Indeed, the power and quality of the reproduction with fibre needles is quite a revelation to those unfamiliar with the possibilities of good external horn machines. In our last article we mentioned the special virtues of the horn machine so we need not particularise here. It is sufficient to say that these models are two of the best examples of their class. Both the Exhibition and the No. 2 are, in our opinion, sound-boxes which have been landmarks in gramophone history; like other "commercial" sound-boxes they vary a good deal in quality but the best of them are in the very front rank. With fibre needles the average Exhibition box is better than the average No. 2 on these machines; but readers who use steel needles will probably find that the Exhibition box, as supplied, coupled with a metal horn will be rather too shrill in quality. Many "steelites" use a wooden horn with the Exhibition box, but these horns are rather smaller than the metal horns. Those who wish to use steel needles would probably be well advised to obtain a No. 2 box for use with the metal horn. If they can afford to get a Virtz box all the better.

We have no hesitation in saying that these H.M.V. horn models give much superior results to any of the other old H.M.V. models and their prices are satisfactory even to the modest purse. This article has been written before we have had an opportunity of full comparison with the new "No. 4" models, but on a first hearing we are confident that the external horn machines will hold their own very well.

Apart from the matter of alignment referred to above, there is one other point to which we would ask the Gramophone Co. to give their attention. The majority of the metal horns sent out from the factory have a tendency to buzz and rattle at the seams which seriously detracts from the quality of the reproduction. This should not be. It is surely but a small matter for a company with such facilities at their command to make certain of curing a fault like this, whilst for the private owner it may be rather a messy affair. There are two simple methods which we have found to be quite effective. The first is to paint the seams liberally with black enamel; "Ripolin," being a flexible enamel, is very good. Particular attention should be paid to the joint at the narrow end of the horn; we find that the tendency to rattle often occurs



there. The disadvantage of this method is that it leaves the horn in a rather unsightly condition. A method which is free from this objection but is rather more troublesome is to paint the seams, inside and outside the horn, with a preparation made by dissolving bits of broken records in hot turpentine. Old "Dictaphone" cylinders, which contain a large proportion of wax, are excellent for this purpose. If ordinary record material is used it is well to mix some beeswax with it. The solution should be applied warm and as strong as possible and care should be taken in heating the turpentine not to set it alight. For the joint at the narrow end of the horn it is well to fill up the crevices by melting bits of record material into them by means of a soldering iron or hot poker. When the treatment is finished the surplus wax can be removed by rubbing down the horn with turpentine or "O-Cedar" polish. In the end the horn is left with a fine waxed surface which improves its appearance rather than otherwise.

*(Just as we go to Press we hear that Model 25 is now no longer made by the Gramophone Company.)*

\* \* \*

#### IV.—THE DOUSONA CABINET MODEL.

Regular readers of THE GRAMOPHONE will by this time be familiar with the general appearance of the "Dousona" oak pedestal model. Since its first appearance at the Gramophone Congress last July, pictures of it have been reproduced month by month in the advertisement pages. But no one who has not examined it in detail can fully appreciate what a remarkable piece of work it is. The cabinet work is solidly constructed of oak-faced 5-ply which in very many ways is superior to the solid wood; the tone-arm and horn, and indeed every part, are finely constructed and beautifully finished. Considered from the point of view of cabinet work alone the Dousona is wonderful value for money; we honestly cannot understand how the makers can produce it at the price, which is the democratic one of £9 9s.; we know of no other machine on the market which can be compared with it in this respect.

As a reproducer, the Dousona is quite an efficient instrument when used with steel needles. The Caxton Hall tests did not really do it justice; the sound-box which the makers were then using was of relatively poor quality. We understand that experiments have since been made with sound-boxes of different types and the Dousona is now fitted with a sound-box similar in construction to the one hitherto used by the Orchorsol Company. This has a 44 m.m. mica diaphragm and a stylus with a cross-spring (Exhibition pattern) suspension. It seems to be pre-eminently suitable for gramophones with

wooden tone-arms. The Dousona tone-arm resembles the old Grafonola tone-arm in shape, though its bore is rather bigger and the needle-track alignment with a needle angle of 60° is much better. In the latter respect the Dousona is superior to most gramophones, though a still further improvement could be made by a slight alteration in design. The vertical and horizontal joints are on ball-bearings and are very free.

From a constructional point of view we were interested in the method by which the tone-arm extension and horn are built up. The material seems to be ply-wood with a cross-grain so that it is always under strain. This strain is, no doubt, responsible in large part for the quite respectable volume of sound which the Dousona emits—a feature which is notable for a horn of such comparatively small cubic content. The horn is completely "floating," being connected with the cabinet only at the junction with the motor board at the base of the tone-arm; it is so beautifully made that we were unable to discover any joints. We are inclined to think that the clearance between the horn and the front of the cabinet might with advantage be increased by about  $\frac{1}{16}$  in. all round; under present conditions there is some danger that after some months of use the horn might touch the front board thereby giving rise to an unpleasant buzz.

The machine gave satisfactory results with all the records we tried. During our tests we used a large diameter sound-box, supplied by the makers, the small diameter box which is now being fitted as a standard and a H.M.V. No. 2 box. On the whole, and especially with vocal records, the latter gave the best results though the small box ran it very close, and for string quality was superior to it. With instrumental records the No. 2 box scored principally on the balance between various instruments. The large diameter box was bad in every respect. These results were all obtained with steel needles, the best being with Columbia medium needles. With fibre needles the results were relatively poor.

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# POPULAR RECORDS

## A THIRD LIST

(Previous lists, compiled from the votes of readers in the July Competition, appeared in the October and November numbers.)

46.—Col. L.1462. *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* (Mendelssohn), played by the N.Q.H. Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood (6s. 6d.).

47.—Col. L.1007. *Le Cygne* (Saint-Saëns) and *Berceuse de Jocelyn* (Godard), played by W. H. Squire (6s. 6d.).

48.—Col. 7302. *Abide with me* (Liddle) and *God shall wipe away all tears* (Sullivan), sung by Dame Clara Butt (8s. 6d.).

49.—H.M.V., D.B.264. *Io son Titania* (Polonaise) from *Mignon* (Thomas) and *Nella calma* from *Roméo et Juliette* (Gounod), sung by Galli-Curci (8s. 6d.).

50, 51.—H.M.V., D.683, 684. Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto in G*, played by the R.A.H. Orchestra under Eugène Goossens (13s.).

52.—Parlo. E.10092. *Dance Duet* and *Evening Prayer* from *Hansel and Gretel* (Humperdinck), sung by Heckmann-Bettendorf and Emma Bassth (4s. 6d.).

53, 54.—Voc. K.05157, 05158. *Siegfried Idyll* (Wagner), played by the Modern Chamber Orchestra under Stanley Chapple (9s.).

55.—Voc. K.05167. *The Erl King* and *Serenade* (Schubert), sung by Roy Henderson (4s. 6d.).

56.—Col. L.1478. *Fingal's Cave Overture* (The

*Hebrides*) (Mendelssohn), played by the N.Q.H. Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood (6s. 6d.).

57.—Col. L.1027. *The Ride of the Valkyries* and *The Song of the Rhine Maidens* (Wagner), played by the N.Q.H. Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood (6s. 6d.).

58, 59.—H.M.V. C.844, 854. *Kreutzer Sonata* (Beethoven), played by Marjorie Hayward and Una Bourne (9s.).

60.—H.M.V., D.B.257. *Caro Nome* from *Rigoletto* (Verdi) and *Ah! fors'è lui* from *La Traviata* (Verdi), sung by Galli-Curci (8s. 6d.).

61, 62.—H.M.V., D.152, 153. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Mendelssohn) and *Merry Wives of Windsor Overture* (Nicolai), played by the R.A.H. Orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald (13s.).

63.—H.M.V., D.A.458. *Ave Maria* (Mascagni) and *Serenade* (Schubert), sung by McCormack, with violin by Kreisler (6s.).

64.—H.M.V., D.B.258. *Lo! here the gentle lark* (Bishop) and *Echo Song* (Bishop), sung by Galli-Curci (8s. 6d.).

65, 66, 67, 68.—H.M.V., D.665, 666, 667, 668. Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony in C Minor, Op. 67*, played by the R.A.H. Orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald (26s.).

69.—Parlo. E.10163. *Porgi amor* and *Dove Sono* from *Figaro* (Mozart), sung by Heckmann-Bettendorf (4s. 6d.).

70.—Voc. A.0215. *Der Nussbaum* (Schumann) and *Der Erlkönig* (Schubert), sung by Elena Gerhardt (5s. 6d.).



# A NOTE ON THE JULY COMPETITION

By GEORGE BLAKE

(Acting Editor of *John o' London's Weekly*)

A FRIEND of mine lives at No. 60, Frith Street, Soho, but now I dare not visit him lest the London staff of THE GRAMOPHONE (inhabiting No. 58) heave a shower of brickbats at my head. For it appears that the results of the competition which arose out of an innocent remark of mine have involved them in an actuarial struggle of unparalleled intricacy.

You will remember how all this pother began. Mr. Compton Mackenzie instituted a competition with the object of increasing the circulation of THE GRAMOPHONE, and I, greatly daring, hazarded the view that his circulation would not increase unless the paper paid more attention to the needs of the beginner in gramophonics. (*New word? If so, copyright.*) Quick to defend his fledgling, Mr. Mackenzie tore the logic of my letter to shreds and held me up to the scorn of his faithful readers. In the next sentence, however, he climbed down a step or two and declared his willingness to award the sum of £5 to that reader who should send in the best list of twenty-five records answering, roughly, to the description of "tried favourites." Whereupon I, not to be outdone in courtesy, offered a modest two guineas in augmentation of the prize fund.

And so the competition was set going. Despite the fact that the "terms of reference," as the lawyers say, were somewhat vague, more than a hundred readers of THE GRAMOPHONE responded to the invitation to compete.

Now there were two ways of dealing with these entries. Mr. Mackenzie, or a committee presided over by Mr. Mackenzie, could have considered the papers and decided, on the broad basis of personal taste, that A.'s paper deserved the first prize, B.'s the second, or so on. The alternative was to apply the principles of proportional representation; and this latter system the London Editor—very wisely, as I think—duly adopted. Applying to the entries the differential calculus, the binomial theorem, and goodness knows what else, he distilled from the hundred-odd lists sent in a duly elected list of twenty-five "tried favourites." But his calculations did not end there. Over the papers he went again, comparing each of them with the elected list. He discovered in the issue that eight competitors had each mentioned ten out of the twenty-five records elected to a place of honour by general acclamation.

At this point I was called in, as the villain of the piece, to make my observations on these eight successful papers.



At first I could say nothing, so great was my delight in the list elected by the general vote. That, I hold, is a magnificent list. I am paternally proud of it. The competition, I maintain, is justified in the result. Even a Scotsman does not grudge those two guineas.... Then I addressed myself to the successful papers.

Two of them I rejected straightaway. One offered a list of twenty-five vocal records, the other a list of twenty-five instrumental records. Then a third fell by the way; it enumerated five Galli-Curci records; and if any man can with patience listen to Galli-Curci's last high note in *Un bel di vedremo* he is not so much a music-lover as a latter-day Christian martyr. A fourth list—a very good list—had to be turned down because it was too eclectic. And then there were four, or five was it? At all events, I marked these in the order of my individual preference, awarding the first prize, if I remember rightly, to a lady. It remained for Mr. Mackenzie to homologate or overturn my judgment. He approved it.

It is now possible (and reasonably safe) to admit that the object of the competition was perhaps not stated at the outset so clearly as it ought to have been. When I first examined the elected list and exclaimed over the excellence of a certain item, the London staff pulled a long face and spoke

gravely: "But it's not a very good record, that." Whereupon I realised that *my* standards in the matter were not gramophone standards, but musical standards. I wanted a list of records of pieces of music, which, possessing an almost universal appeal—with the essential quality of melody predominant—were yet of classic worth and perdurable texture. Nothing "high-brow" should have a place; nothing sloppy should be admitted. It was obvious that the list should be nicely balanced between the vocal and the instrumental; that the vocal section should cover the range of the human voice; and that the instrumental section should be nicely balanced between the solo and the concerted performance. It was interesting to observe in the lists how many competitors stressed the performer rather than the piece performed. There was too much Caruso, too much Galli-Curci.

At all events, however vague the terms of reference, the competitors did nobly. The elected list is good. For myself, I could have done without... But let that pass. The list as it stands is good enough for me, and I shall buy forthwith those records mentioned which I do not already possess. Then I shall approach the Editor anent a small percentage on increased circulation

G. B.



## TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

### Mozart

The stupendous industry of Mr. Francis E. Terry has made this into a bumper number, and his comprehensive survey of Mozart instrumental and orchestral records will be completed in the February number. As these two articles must for a long while remain the *locus classicus* on this subject they should on no account be mislaid or—horrid thought—cast away. Already the November number, with its important article on the Lifebelt, is practically unobtainable; and though we may like to see a number sold out, we are always sentimentally devastated by the necessity of disappointing eager enquirers for precious back numbers.

Mr. Herman Klein's article on the Mozart operatic records will also be continued in the February number. In his case it should perhaps be mentioned that only a selection of the available records, made by the London Editor in consultation with "Piccolo," was sent to Mr. Klein, who is not therefore responsible for any omissions.

### Sir Henry Wood

The fund which has been started as a personal testimonial to Sir Henry Wood and "an appreciation of the intense pleasure his music has given to so many of us during the last thirty-one years," is sure of support from all sides, especially as Sir Henry's wish, we are told, is "to devote this money to introducing new music to the public and for extra-special rehearsals." Donations may be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. William Bennett, 32, Kensington Square, London, W. 8.

### The Talking Machine World

The October number of this wonderful American trade paper contains no less than 226 pages—and it costs 25 cents. It has for a long time been regularly read by us, and now in the October issue we read with pride that a copy of THE GRAMOPHONE has come into the hands of William Braid White, who, in his fifty-fourth monthly article, headed "A Great Movement," deals with us in the most generous and flattering manner and devotes a special paragraph to the National Gramophonic Society. It is very pleasant to hear strangers speak well of you and to say the things which you would like to say yourself if you had the nerve. Here's a how, William Braid White!

D

### The Widening Circle

A reader at Great Malvern sends the following extract from the *Worcester Daily Times*: "Claines Parish Church, Sunday next, October 18th, at 3 p.m., Gramophone Recital of Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* (soloist Isolde Menges) and Tchaikovsky's *Symphonic Pathétique*, played by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. Timpani will be used. All seats free."

### Reviews

The number of records issued seems to increase. Columbia and H.M.V. between them are responsible for about a hundred a month, while Parlophones and Vocalions are not far behind. Now Polydors have entered the lists, so to speak; and more space is claimed by the reviewers. We try to deal fairly with *all* the records sent in; and it should be clearly understood that if a record is not mentioned it may be assumed to be not worth buying. This applies equally to records which are not sent to THE GRAMOPHONE for review; for all the makers of records have been invited to submit their wares to our reviewers; and if some have declined the invitation, or have ceased to accept it, our readers are justified in drawing a logical inference; and since the object of THE GRAMOPHONE from the outset has been to help the public to buy wisely, without fear or favour, it strengthens our power for good whenever a reader declines to consider the purchase of any record which has not at the least been mentioned in the reviews.

### An Admirable Gift

There is a Natsopa Memorial Home at Market Bosworth. Natsopa is short for National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants, the general secretary of which, Mr. G. A. Isaac, is largely responsible for the founding of the home for convalescents and aged members of the Society. Our printers, Messrs. Hazell, Watson and Viney, made a donation to the home, part of which was, with unconscious felicity, spent on the purchase of a gramophone; and the gramophone chosen, as a direct outcome of our gramophone congress in July—so we are assured—was a pedestal model of the Dousona. Congratulations to all concerned.

### A Record Lending Library

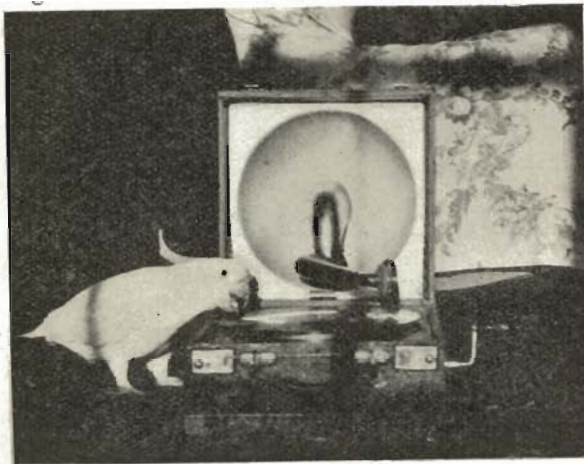
There are several interesting points in the management of the Gramophone Record Library, which is run by the Horwich Railway



Mechanics' Institute. For one thing, fibre needles only are allowed. The charges for hire work out at about  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per shilling value for a week, and there is a fine of 1d. per day for each record kept more than seven days. The records are labelled on a very ingenious plan; each class of record has an alphabetical heading, each artist or combination a numerical heading, followed by a decimal point and then by the actual number of the record. Thus sopranos are A, Galli-Curci is 5, and the tenth record by her bought for the library is labelled A 5.10. The librarian, who says that THE GRAMOPHONE has been found most valuable for the selection of records, notes that among the members vocal records are most in demand, followed by pianoforte records. We shall be glad to put anyone in touch with him who is interested in the formation of a similar lending library.

### Intelligent Animals

Photographs of "Mickey" listening to a gramophone in Johannesburg have been published in earlier numbers. Here are two more of the same sort, one a backyard scene sent by Mr. A. R. Wootton, of Nottingham, the other an indifferent snapshot of a cockatoo belonging to a member of our staff. This cockatoo



not only listens attentively to records, but removes them from the turntable with his beak.

### The Trinity College of Music

As an instance of what can and ought to be done in every institution where music is studied, let us cite the case of the Trinity College of Music, Mandeville Place, London, W. Luckily our good friend Mr. W. W. Cobbett is chairman of the Corporation, so perhaps it is chiefly due to him that the College has a big Orchestrated machine and a collection of all the best records of chamber music, is a subscriber to THE GRAMOPHONE and a member of the National Gramophonic Society. Recitals are given, at which not complete works but an "anthology" of recorded chamber music is played, as (to take the programme for October 15th, when Professor Bridge presided and Mr. Cobbett supplied the introductory remarks to each record) movements from Haydn's *Quartet in D major*, Op. 64, No. 5, Mozart's *C major*, Beethoven's *E flat*, Brahms' *A minor*, Elgar's *Op. 83*, Kreisler's *A minor*, and the *Phantasie* of Frank Bridge, which won a Cobbett prize originally. Such recitals in such exalted spheres are an encouraging sign of the times.

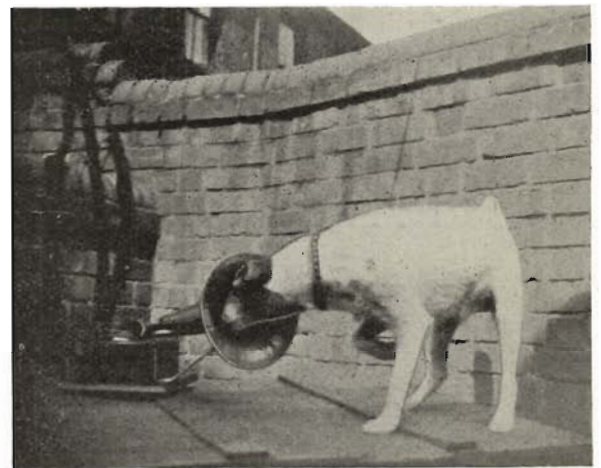
### Good Vocalions

One of our readers, Mr. E. Hooper, of Golders Green, is struck by the small proportion of Vocalion records mentioned in the reports of gramophone societies, and maintaining that they are "without doubt the finest value-for-money proposition in the gramophone world," gives a list of records that can be "absolutely relied upon." Needless to say, we have repeatedly advised all our readers to study the Vocalion catalogue, from which a selected list was given in the April number, page 427. Mr. E. Hooper specifies the following in addition: Destournel, J.04108; Olga Haley,

K.05122; Frank Titterton, D.02134; Sapellnikoff, A.0231; Aeolian Orchestra, D.02130; and the Life Guards Band, K.05102; and adds a plea for more piano recordings—"What about Myra Hess, Iturbi, Giesecking, Howard-Jones, and Herbert Fryer?"—on the ground that Sapellnikoff and York Bowen are apt to play their own compositions on one side of each record.

### The Forum Awards

Those of our readers who took the trouble to vote for the best articles appearing in "The Forum" for September, October and November were evidently convinced that the ladies had justified themselves nobly; for the first prize of Five Pounds was won by Mrs. Grew with her article, "From the Aeolian Harp," in the November number, the second (Three Pounds) by Miss Trotman for "The Convert" (October), and the third (Two Pounds) by Mrs. Rainford ("Scrutatrix") for "Married to a Gramophile." Whether there has been any wire-pulling or not, the fact remains that the names in the above order appear on six voting cards, two of which are disqualified as insufficiently signed and addressed; so will the following please write saying what records, up to the



value of 5s. each, they desire—Blanche Duncan, John Duncan, Gertrude Stampe, and Gladys Stampe?

### Vatican Choir Records

Among records arriving just too late for review in this number are four more Parlophones of the Sistine Choir. They are bound to be very welcome if they are as good as the two previous issues, and the complaint of a shortage of choral records is no longer justified.

### N.G.S. Notes

The next page having been absorbed by particulars of the National Gramophonic Society and by N. P.'s Note on the Brahms *Sextet*, which was the last work issued to members to complete the output for the first year, no space is left for the Hon. Secretary's report on the voting for this year's work. This will appear in the next number, and in the meanwhile arrangements are being made to record the works chosen.

### Apologies

The Lifebelt may bring happiness to many homes, but at present it has brought nothing but distress to the London Office. Shoals of letters and postal orders followed the Editor's announcement in the last number, and a week later shoals of postcards and letters of plaintive or minatory import followed. But the Lifebelts stayed away. They only began to arrive on the day when the last copies of the November number were sold out; but by this time we hope that all the applicants have been satisfied. We are always trying to please our readers, and often they find us—very trying.



# National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All Communications should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.)

The object of the National Gramophonic Society is to aim at achieving for gramophone music what such societies as the *Medici* have done for the printed book.

**T**HE current year began on October 1st. In 1924-25 the following works were issued to members: Beethoven, *String Quartet in E flat, Op. 74*; Debussy, *String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10*; Schubert, *Piano Trio in E flat, Op. 100*; Schönberg, *String Sextet, Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4*; Beethoven, *String Quartet in F major, Op. 59, No. 1*; Brahms, *String Sextet in B flat major, Op. 18*; on twenty-four twelve-inch double-sided records.

The *Quartets* were played by the Spencer Dyke Quartet (Spencer Dyke and Edwin Quaife, violins, Ernest Tomlinson, viola, and Patterson Parker, 'cello); the *Schubert Trio* by Spencer Dyke, Patterson Parker, and Harold Craxton, piano, and the two *Sextets* by the Spencer Dyke Quartet with James Lockyer, violin, and E. J. Robinson, 'cello. In addition to these, in the early part of the year, Mr. W. W. Cobbett presented the first 300 members with a record of the *Allegro* from Rubinstein's *Quartet in F, Op. 17, No. 3*, and *The Declaration* from Raff's *Maid of the Mill Suite, Op. 192, No. 2*. The quartet which played these works was led by Mr. Cobbett himself. A few copies still remain, and are available to members at 5s. each. It must be clearly understood that no member may sell any N.G.S. record for less than 7s. 6d. But breakages, etc., can be replaced to members at 5s. each record.

In the choice of works the Committee (which consists of the Editor, the London Editor, and Messrs. W. R. Anderson, W. W. Cobbett, Spencer Dyke, and Alec Robertson) is guided by the voting on a preliminary list which is sent to members at the beginning of the year. As far as possible it is ascertained whether the works chosen are due to be recorded or issued in the near future by the various gramophone companies, so that duplication may be avoided.

Up to the present financial reasons have confined the output to chamber music, but with the growth of the society more ambitious works may be issued.

The membership subscription is 5s. a year; the record subscription, for 24 discs, is £6 a year for the records at 5s. each and 10s. for postage and packing, for members in Great Britain. Members who wish to fetch their records from the office are not, of course, expected to pay this 10s. Overseas members pay 25s. instead of 10s. at the beginning of each year. The subscription can be paid in one lump sum of £6 15s. on October 1st, or two payments of £3 10s. and £3 5s. on October 1st and April 1st respectively, or monthly, 16s. on October 1st and 11s. on the first day of the other months of the year.

## A Note on the Brahms Sextet in B flat major, Op. 18.

It is extraordinary that so acute and discerning a critic as the late R. A. Streatfield could write of Brahms, in his fine book "Modern Music and Musicians" (now unfortunately out of print), that "despite the extraordinary talent displayed in many of his works, I find him on the whole strangely uninspired and uninspiring. Brahms seems to me to be one of those composers who, save at rare moments of supreme inspiration, require the foundation of words upon which to build. I do not find in his abstract music any expression of personality. Its technical ability is beyond question, but as a record of emotion, if indeed it were ever designed as such, it appears to me to belong to a different world from the music of Beethoven, Schubert, or Schumann."

Such an array of misstatements and half-truths is most imposing, but this long quotation is given because the same attitude is still to be discovered amongst some music lovers: perhaps even in the ranks of the elect—the members of the N.G.S.

Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms stand together in making an intellectual as well as an emotional appeal; and of Bach and Brahms this is especially true. Schubert, Schumann, and Wagner may appeal solely to the emotions. Why decry Brahms on account of high intellectual powers which happen to be allied to a modest and retiring nature? Given a fair hearing his music will be found to yield up rich beauty, not indeed always immediately, a beauty reinforced by splendid craftsmanship, which in itself is an aesthetic pleasure to contemplate.

It must again be said that a score is absolutely indispensable for a proper appreciation of this work. Call that a limitation if you will, but it is a fact that many delightful features in the musical architecture will go unperceived unless the eye accompanies the ear.

**First Movement. Allegro ma non troppo. Part I.** (Score, page 1 to page 10, line 3, bar 5). Eulenburg.—The strong tune which forms the first subject is given out by the first 'cello and then by the first violin and first viola. Metrically it is a nine-bar phrase. Few things in music give such pleasure as to be borne upon the wings of a long-breathed phrase. The tune grows in interest, as the triplet variation on the first violin, just after an entry on the second, evinces. First violin and first viola are allotted the second subject (in the curious key of A major) which bears distinct traces of the influence of Schubert. A pendant to this tune appears on first 'cello presently joined by the first violin, and yet another, again on the latter instrument. It is hard to see who could call such melodious passages the work of a dried-up academician. The music subsides in the loveliest way to a gently-breathed phrase for the second viola.

**Part II.** (Score, page 10, line 3, bar 5, to page 18, line 2, bar 1.)—After the exuberance of the foregoing matter the development section starts in a rather sombre manner, but presently lightens to make way for a beautiful entry of the second subject as a duologue between violins and first 'cello. Some very thick, not to say muddy, writing follows until we reach—

**Part III.** (Score, page 18, line 2, bar 1, to end, page 25.)—The two tunes make constant re-appearance with different part-distribution, but the end of the movement is a thrilling surprise. The music slows down with, appropriately enough, the first subject predominant. Then, most unexpectedly, a pendant of the second subject is sounded by the first viola with it and all the other strings *pizzicato*. First violin follows suit *accelerando*; an enchanting conclusion.

**Second Movement. Andante, ma Moderato. Part IV.** (Score, page 26 to page 32, line 2, bar 2.)—An air with variations. It will be seen (for the ear might not realise it) that the first phrase of the air is laid out for a quartet of violas and 'cellos, the violins being added for the responsive phrase; a similar use being followed for the succeeding phrases so that the treatment is antiphonal.

The air, in D minor, is robust, not romantic, and the easily followed variations (1 to 3) do nothing to change this impression. The surging passages for 'cellos in the third variation are noteworthy; the tune floats bravely on these storm-tossed waters.

**Part V.** (Score, page 32, line 3, bar 1, to end, page 36.)—And now in a harbour of rest. This variation, in the major key, induces an infinite feeling of peace. The next variation (No. 5) is a delicate pastoral in which a viola tells of country joys. (Compare this with the twenty-second of the Handel-Brahms variations, op. 24). With the last variation the first 'cello gravely and solemnly reminds us of the original air; but the last note is not one of unrelieved gravity, as the violins are quick to assure us, and even the 'cello is compelled to admit.

**Third Movement. Part VI.** (Page 37 to end, page 41.)—The scherzo finds Brahms in jovial mood; like him, it is simple, straightforward, and full of fun; the *coda*, indeed, is hilarious.

**Fourth Movement. Rondo. Poco Allegretto e gracioso. Part VII.** (Score, page 42 to page 48, line 3, bar 8.)—The *Rondo* tune is laid out, at the start, and for some time, for two trios; the first, second viola and the two 'cellos; the second, the two violins and the first viola. Nearly at the end of this side Brahms obtains a charming effect by giving the *Rondo* tune to the first violin, *pizzicato* accompaniment to first viola and first 'cello, the rest bowed accompaniment.

**Part VIII.** (Score, page 49, bar 1, to page 57, bar 5.)—Delightful variety is given to the return of the *Rondo* tune by giving half of it to first violin and half to first 'cello; so the interruption of the latter sounds like impatience to sing such a jolly tune.

**Part IX.** (Score, page 57, bar 5, to the end.)—The swift *coda*, the chief interest on this side, is ingeniously contrived; the way in which the *Rondo* is joined on to it being masterly. Here both violins and both 'cellos answer *pizzicato*-wise the rapid utterance, semi-staccato, of the viola, and the music rushes to an exhilarating conclusion.

N. P.



# ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

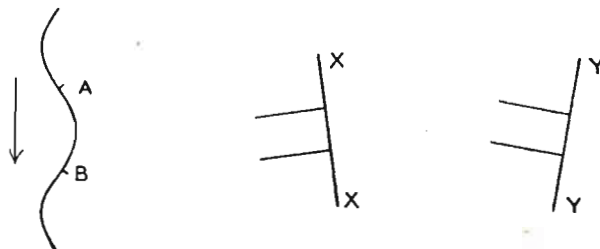
## VIII.—The Flexible Connector—(continued).

JUST as I started to write this article I received from the Rev. L. D. Griffith a most excited account of an experiment which he has made with the sample Lifebelt I sent him last month. His original discovery of what a Flexible Connector would do was made on a Vocalion Cabinet, £12 model. This had a 7-inch tone-arm of the "straight" pattern, the bend at the sound-box end being about three-quarters of an inch long. Mr. Griffith had two other tone-arms, one 7 inches and the other 9 inches long, but in their cases the right angle bend was about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. These two tone-arms had not given anything like the same results with the Lifebelt as the first, either on the Vocalion instrument or on another gramophone which Mr. Griffith possesses. It occurred to him to cut back the ends of these tone-arms so that the length of the bend should be about half an inch, measured from the nearest side of the tone-arm and not from its central line. With the Lifebelt in position there was thus nearly half an inch of the bend inside the tube, and the back of the sound-box would be about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches from the centre line of the tone-arm.

The result evidently staggered Mr. Griffith. He described it as "magnificent and truly amazing," and seemed very surprised at my reluctance to advise everyone straightway to cut their tone-arms in the manner indicated. But the more I learn about gramophones the more certain I become that what is all right for one machine may be quite otherwise for another. In any case I grow more and more chary about advising people to make irrevocable alterations in their machines. It is rather like a doctor making a diagnosis and prescription on the basis of information, usually inadequate, sent on by post; a most unsatisfactory sort of responsibility to take. In this instance, however, Mr. Griffith's observations are quite in accordance with my own, made in entirely different circumstances, and fit in well with the general theory outlined by Mr. Balmain last month. There is no universal virtue in that "half-inch," but there are decided virtues in Mr. Griffith's arrangement, and it so happens that for most "straight" tone-arms on the market half an inch is about right. There are two reasons for this; the first is acoustical, and the second mechanical. In the first place, a sound-box diaphragm is resonant to a wider range of pitch and less selective of one particular pitch if it is "air-damped"; and for this purpose a certain amount of straight-sided, non-tapered tube of rather narrow bore is very effective. The requisite amount varies, of course, with different sound-boxes, but some is always an advantage. The second reason is given in

Note 7 of my last article; when the Lifebelt is in position the face of the sound-box should point slightly to the left of the mean line of the groove.

It is worth while examining this point more closely. The first figure shows, diagrammatically



and in exaggerated form, a small portion of a groove which is moving straight down the paper. The second shows a sound-box XX, with Lifebelt attached, which points slightly to the left of the mean line of the groove, and the third shows YY pointing slightly to the right. It is to be observed that the friction of the record on the needle is pulling the sound-box down towards the bottom of the paper. It can therefore twist XX in a clockwise direction, against the flexibility of the Lifebelt, towards the position YY; but it can only twist YY further from the position XX. If then the sound-box is in the position XX when at rest, the friction will tend to twist it round when the needle is at B, and the Lifebelt will pull it back again when the needle gets to the point A. So that by using a Lifebelt and sound-box in this way the needle can follow the groove better. If the needle angle is steep there is less length of needle enclosed within the groove and the turning movement is facilitated. On the other hand, when the sound-box is arranged in the position YY when at rest, the needle will follow the groove all right at the point B, but it will lie across the groove at the point A, and can only be twisted further across, in which case there will be a tendency for it to leap out of the groove altogether. The only corrective against this tendency is the torsional flexibility of the Lifebelt which enables the needle to travel along with the groove a little way. But this torsional flexibility, as Mr. Balmain points out, needs to be restrained, since it affects pitch.

The instrument which would lend itself most readily to a demonstration of these points is the new Grafonola. To fix the Lifebelt to the Columbia fitting by means of an adaptor will over-correct the alignment as at YY. But by cutting off the Columbia fitting and fixing the Lifebelt on to the tone-arm direct an improved alignment would result.

P. WILSON.



# Gramophone Societies' Reports

**THE BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The November meeting was held Tuesday, 3rd inst, at headquarters, New Morris Hall, Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W. The members' programme was in the hands of Mr. J. Fisher, who devoted his efforts to the works of French composers. Though not of great length they were representative, introducing in turn Berlioz, Charpentier, Debussy, Massenet, Lalo, Bizet, Vieuxtemps, and Ravel. On conclusion Mr. Fisher received well-merited applause. This will perhaps encourage programmes of similar construction on future occasions, it being desirable when possible to present a definite scheme rather than a list of records. We are indebted to Messrs. The Orchorsol Company for our first hearing of the new H.M.V. instrument. Opinions varied on the capabilities of the machine, mostly agreeing that it is a vast improvement on the model it now supersedes. As for it being a revolution, the phrase sounds familiar, and I leave it at that.

After the interval, Mr. Ling, who is in the employ of the Columbia Company, gave his long-promised talk, "How Records are Made." Mr. Ling had us to understand he was not delivering an official lecture, but doing his best to interest us in his capacity as member.

We acknowledge receipt of records from the Vocalion Company. These were played and elicited favourable comment—namely: *Concerto No. 3 in G* (Mozart), Jelly d'Aranyi with Aeolian Orchestra; *Habñera, Carmen* (Bizet), Phyllis Archibald; *Was duftest doch, Meistersinger* (Wagner), M. Murray Davey; *Grand Valse, Op. 18* (Chopin), Sapellnikoff; the Mozart *Concerto* deserving special mention. Miss d'Aranyi played with beautiful tone; this coupled with excellent surface made these three discs a delight. Please address communications, Hon. Secretary, J. T. Fisher, Esq., 28a, Fieldhouse Road, Balham, S.W.—S. N. COLLINS, Reporting Secretary.

**EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The ninety-second monthly meeting of the above society was held on Saturday, October 17th, at headquarters, Laithorne Restaurant, 15, Broadway, Stratford, and was very largely attended. Being the first meeting of the winter session a special programme was arranged, the complete Gilbert and Sullivan opera, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, being performed. The records used were from the H.M.V. album, which includes all the singing and orchestral parts, but the talking parts are not included, so to overcome this omission and to render the opera complete, a cast was formed by members and friends of the society to provide the missing link. And right well did they carry this through. This experiment of playing a complete Gilbert and Sullivan opera, words and music, was greatly appreciated by the members, who at the close requested that more of these operas should be done in the same manner.

Time was also found to demonstrate records issued during October and many H.M.V., Columbia, and Parlophone records were played. The Parlophone Company have introduced to us two new sopranos, Fritz Jökl and Margarethe Siems. Both of these artists will readily appeal to the lovers of coloratura singing. Edith Lorand, with a wonderful piano accompaniment, gives a delightful violin solo called *Ungarisches Lied*. Beethoven's *Die Weihe des Hauses Overture* is a good orchestral recording by the Opera House Orchestra. The Irmeler Madrigal Ladies' Choir sing two old folk songs, *The Violet* and *Hedge-roses*, in their usual talented manner. Full particulars of the society will be sent on application to the hon. secretary, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham.—W. J. WORLEY, Hon. Secretary.

**NORTH-WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The society really let itself go at its meeting on November 8th. Messrs. Lister and Sons, 234, Harrow Road, the H.M.V. specialists, very kindly placed at the disposal of the society a pick of the complete range of the new H.M.V. instruments; the one chosen being a cabinet as nearly as possible the same size as the standard instrument hitherto used by the society, and so we were able to carry out some very interesting and exact comparisons. Nearly all the *Ave Maria* compositions and their many recordings were on the programme. The only orchestral record was most lugubrious, fitly backed by the *Funeral March of a Marionette* on the other side. The Irmeler Madrigal Choir, on the other hand, has given us two really beautiful *Ave Maria* records, and with the one by the Sistine Chapel Choir—all three by different composers—we have the full Parlophone range. This company has very wisely not attempted to issue yet more duplicates of Gounod's and Schubert's, both of

which appear far too numerous in the catalogues, and together proved such a *pièce de résistance* that it was only thanks to a preliminary weeding out on the part of a small and devoted band of musical heroes that our members survived. We could tell Columbia and H.M.V. of many records which could with advantage be deleted from their catalogues! Sasha Culbertson (Vocalion) was surprisingly good. Jelly d'Aranyi, in Mozart's *Violin Concerto No. 3 in G*, came out splendidly on the new H.M.V. instrument. The improved recording and surface do full justice to the playing. A most valuable contribution to opera in English comes from Doris Woodall, who has made a fine record of the *Habñera* from *Carmen*; of this more anon. Bravo, Vocalion! If you go on like this the expensive firms will have to look to their laurels and prices.

Parlophone, with its usual enterprise, has been the first to publish a record of the long-awaited *Queen of the Night* aria, and it is quite a good one. But why only one, dear Parlophone? And why mix your operas on the same disc?—F. D. VENN and E. G. LAMBLE, Hon. Secretaries.

**THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The meeting on October 31st was intended to centre round Weber and Mendelssohn, but a comprehensive programme from their recorded works is not at present quite feasible, especially as regards the former, and indeed in his case we are almost exclusively dependent upon the Polydor catalogue. Mendelssohn has been under a cloud for years, and it is at present rare to hear even some of his most characteristic work or even the incidental music from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, although it is possible from a gramophonic view to compile a fair list if we scan all the available catalogues. But what a sealed book to many must be Weber's operas, such as *Oberon* and *Der Freischütz*. Happily we heard one of the most dramatic arias that there are, that of *Oberon, thou mighty monster*, here a Polydor, rendered by Frieda Leider, and also the air from *Der Freischütz* known as *Agatha's Prayer*, of which there are several versions available, the one under notice being by Lilly Hafgren-Dinkela. The remaining Weber number was the truncated version of the *Invitation to the Waltz*, here played by Cortot; but when are we to have it uncut? Large demands were made upon those other nineteenth-century giants, Brahms, Schubert, and Wagner, and we thus heard *Die Mainacht*, *An die Musik*, *Gute Nacht* (from *Winterreise*), and excerpts from the *Flying Dutchman* and *Siegfried*. The two Schubert numbers were rendered by Jadlowker, who appears one of the best if not the best of the Polydor tenors, and the disc comprising *Gute Nacht* with, on the reverse, *Erstarrung*, is one of the best in this catalogue. Mozart was not forgotten, and *Papageno's Song* from the *Magic Flute* was given by Friedrich Schorr, incidentally the only available one, and this prompts the query, "When are Mozart's operas to be adequately represented in the English lists?" At present what may be termed the conventional numbers are to be had, sometimes two or three times over, but there still remains a great deal that could be recorded. Selected arias by Donizetti, Flotow, Verdi, and Gounod were heard, perhaps the most welcome being one of the quartets from *Martha*, by Caruso, Alda, Jacoby, and Journet. The programme-givers, Miss Woolgar and Mr. Osborne, were congratulated on their respective high-class selections.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, Reporting Secretary.

**THE ACCRINGTON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The first meetings of this session were held in their new premises (the Accrington and Church Co-operative Society's rooms), Stanley Street, on October 7th and 21st respectively. On each occasion the room was crowded, and the committee feel fairly confident of having just entered upon a very successful and happy series of recitals, competitions, and lecture evenings.

A welcome addition to this season's meetings is (so say the ladies!) that refreshments may be obtained during the interval.

The opening recital with our esteemed president, Mr. Mason, in the chair, was given by Dr. Hanna, a gramophonist of repute in Greater Accrington. Not only has he the right records, but the right story to relate against each one. The orchestral selection, *Moresque*, played by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra, headed the list, and following on were songs by Phyllis Lett, Edna Thornton, Peter Dawson, and Hubert Eisdell; pianoforte solos by Godowsky, an instrumental piece by the Elman String Quartette, a violin solo by Erica Morini, a cello solo by W. H. Squire, and last, but not least, the great chorus, *Adeste Fideles*, by the American Glee Clubs.



The second gathering was left in the hands of two demonstrators, Messrs. W. E. Halstead and H. Stimpson, both "old hands" and each capable of selecting a good programme. The audience was not disappointed, and the rounds of applause after the chairman's (our president again!) speech at the close showed the good feeling existing in the stalls for the demonstrators on the platform.

Mr. Halstead's programme was as follows: Overture, *Caliph of Bagdad*, by the Coldstream Guards band; song, *La Paloma*, by Gogorza; song, *Same dear old place*, by Sophie Braslau; 'cello solo, *Melody in F*, by W. H. Squire; song, *Goodbye*, by John McCormack; song, *Fiddle and I*, by Alma Gluck; song, *The Song of the Volga Boatmen*, by Chaliapine, and *I like my old Home Town*, by Harry Lauder.

Mr. Stimpson pleased the company well with the string quartet, *Molly on the Shore*. He also gave the song *Danny Boy*, by Dora Labbette; song, *The Holy City*, by Gogorza; song, *To-day we Meet*, by Derek Oldham; duet, *Ai nostri monti*, by Caruso and Madam Schumann-Heink; song, *Come d'aurato*, by Madame Galli-Curci; song, *Ay, ay, ay*, by Michele Fleta; and lastly, the Brunswick record, *American Republican March*.

The new H.M.V. instrument was used on this occasion, and very interesting it was to hear the varying opinions as to its merits; some spoke with enthusiasm as to its being the finest instrument ever turned out, whilst one at least considered it not a "patch on the one he had at home." Meetings are to be held on the first and third Wednesdays in each month until the end of April, 1926.—L. MOORE.

**CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The inaugural meeting of this society took place on Monday, October 26th, in the Conservative Club Room in Cambridge. This society has been greatly honoured by Dr. Alan Gray, who has accepted the presidency. The aims of the society are to encourage the appreciation of good music, to give members every opportunity of hearing the best music and to provide a means whereby those interested in recorded music may meet each other and discuss any important matter.

The first programme consisted of the *Overture to the Marriage of Figaro*, Beethoven's *Eighth Symphony*, Schubert songs by Elena Gerhardt, Bach's *Concerto for two violins*, and the *Rosenkavalier Waltz*.

Meetings are to be held every Monday during full term and the subscription is 2s. a term.

Acknowledgments are due to Messrs. Miller for the loan of a new model H.M.V. machine which astonished everybody by its remarkable reproduction, especially of the new process records which were played at the next meeting on Monday, November 2nd. The record of *La Boutique Fantasque*, as played on the new model, made a profound impression. It is hoped in the near future to arrange some descriptive concerts given by leading local musicians.

It is desired to state that the membership of the society is not confined to members of the University only, but to all local enthusiasts.—L. B. NEEL, *Hon. Secretary*, Caius College.

**CANNOCK CHASE GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—A recital took place in the Link Room, Chadsmoor, on November 2nd, at 7 p.m. Messrs. H. Taylor, of Walsall, kindly lent us a pleated diaphragm H.M.V. The announcement that the Vocalion Co. had kindly sent us a selection of nine records from the November list and were doing this each month was received with much surprise and pleasure. It was with hearty interest that the records of Murray-Davey, Malcolm McEachern, Phyllis Archibald, and Sapellnikoff were listened to. Unfortunately time did not permit the playing of the concerto, John Coates, and Moschetto, but these will come in the November 16th meeting. The pleated H.M.V. brought all records out with an astounding realism, and one could not help but hear the comments of members upon the beautiful playing and tone of the Sapellnikoff records. The Murray-Davey came out very well and excelled, in the opinion of members, the interpretation of Norman Allin. Phyllis Archibald did not make the best of *Habañera*, and the interpretation of Madame d'Alvarez (Vocalion) could not be bettered. It will be interesting to compare these wonderful records with the more expensive ones, and so far they are in a very competitive position. The members decided to hold the meeting each fortnight instead of monthly. A committee was chosen and the financial statement given, which was most satisfactory. Progress was being made rapidly. The last half of the programme was given by Mr. S. E. Willetts. The next meeting will be held on November 16th, at 7 p.m. Messrs. H. Taylor have kindly offered to lend the society a new H.M.V. model for that date, and a grand programme has been fixed already.—S. E. WILLETTS, *Hon. Secretary*.

**DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The society, which has adopted the Church House, Dewsbury, for its winter quarters, commenced a promising season with an open meeting on October 6th—a well-varied programme being presented by Mr. W. A. Newsome, Batley. In spite of the fact that the town was *en fête* with a brilliantly gay shopping week, the Church House was full to overflowing; Mr. H. Pritchard (chairman) voiced the committee's gratification for such encouragement, and detailed the syllabus for the session. Mr. Newsome's programme was well received and included *Old Glory* (a march worth naming), by Black Dyke Band (Regal); *Concerto in G minor* (Mendelssohn), by Moiseiwitsch; *The Midnight Review* (Glinka), dramatically rendered by Norman Allin; *Concerto No. 4 in D* (Mozart), Kreisler's greatest recording; *Instrumental Trio* (Schumann), Catterall, Squires, and Murdoch; the programme concluded with a humorous item, *My word, you do look queer* (H.M.V.), by Ernest Hastings. The night resulted in ten new members.

On Oct. 13th Mr. Pritchard, Batley, gave a superb evening with Gilbert and Sullivan, the success being due in great measure to the exemplary attention of the members present. The programme covered the whole of the Savoy operas recorded, and a Gilbert and Sullivan night can heartily be recommended for inclusion in any society syllabus.

Mr. Stanley Brasher, from the chair, emphasised the value of a gramophone society, as a stepping-stone to better musical understanding.

On November 10th Mr. Brasher gave a talk on "Music of Various Nations," illustrated with suitable records, and on November 24th Mr. G. H. Hirst (the society's president and an organist of wide repute) gave a Wagnerian programme.—K. WALKER, *Hon. Secretary*.

**EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—The monthly meeting was held on Thursday evening, November 5th, in Mr. Benstead's audition saloon. The first items rendered were a collection of records kindly presented by the Vocalion Co. These were tried on the new No. 4 H.M.V. model, which showed a marked improvement on the bass and general tone of the older models. The general opinion was that it is a wonderful instrument. Our president then gave a short explanation of the composition of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* with the aid of a piano and two records, and was loudly applauded, promising to give us another treat in the near future. Another innovation of the president was the introduction of refreshments during the interval, which was much enjoyed by the company. The latter part of the evening was utilised in listening to new issues, and altogether a delightful evening was spent. The December meeting will be a members' night. Each member to bring his favourite record, also a friend, and a jolly evening is anticipated.—R. J. PAINE.

**THE GLASGOW AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The new session opened on Tuesday, October 13th, with a visit from our esteemed patron and Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE, Mr. Compton Mackenzie, who lectured to us on "The Future of the Gramophone." There was a large and representative attendance which quite filled the spacious banqueting hall of the Ca'doro Restaurant. Our new president, Mr. Jas. C. Stewart, occupied the chair and introduced Mr. Mackenzie to the meeting.

During the course of a humorous and entertaining address, Mr. Mackenzie reviewed his own entry into gramophonics. He emphasised the fact that the instrument was still in its infancy, and suggested that, relatively, it was now in the same position as printing in its early stages. We had not arrived anywhere at all. Mr. Mackenzie does not regard wireless as a serious competitor to the gramophone, because one cannot get what one is in the mood for at a particular time. He counselled those present not to get "high-brow" about "jazz"; many "jazz" tunes contained snatches of classical music and were partly built upon a classical foundation. Referring further to "jazz," he emphasised the value and power of rhythm in music and referred in complimentary terms to the broken rhythm contained in "jazz" music and declared that, whereas the level rhythm of the waltz took us nowhere along the path of musical education "jazz," well played, and well recorded, would take us further along the classical road. In the course of his lecture Mr. Mackenzie referred to the new "gadget" which, he thought, would give great satisfaction. "And it will only cost you five bob," he added. We await with interest this latest addition to gramophone gadgets, particularly, as Scotsmen, because of its economic price.

At the close of his lecture Mr. Mackenzie answered many questions regarding instruments, sound-boxes, needles, and needle-track alignment very satisfactorily, and gave many valuable hints



regarding these and other matters of vital importance to gramophonists. He also referred to the possibility of a two-day gramophone congress in Glasgow towards the end of March next year.

Messrs. Patersons Sons and Co., Ltd., provided a suitable programme of gramophone music to follow the lecture.

We thoroughly enjoyed the visit of Mr. Mackenzie, and we have reason to believe that he also enjoyed being in Glasgow and meeting such a large number of enthusiasts. We look forward with pleasure to an early return visit. We also had the pleasure of meeting Mr. W. H. Weston, of Gramophone (Publications) Ltd., who accompanied Mr. Mackenzie north, and who also left a good impression behind him; we hope to meet him again.

Our new session promises to be "top-hole," and we cordially invite all resident in Glasgow district and who are interested to communicate with the hon. secretary, at 66, Prince Edward Street, S. 2.—T. MACFARLANE, *Hon. Secretary*.

**THE HUDDERSFIELD GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The above society was inaugurated at a meeting held at the Y.M.C.A. premises, Huddersfield, on Thursday, November 5th. A constitution was drawn up and the objects of the society were defined as follows: "To provide opportunity for gramophone lovers to meet and to exchange views; to organise public and private lectures and recitals, and a library of records." Mr. S. H. Crowther was elected chairman, Mr. H. A. Shaw was appointed secretary, and Mr. F. Sunderland treasurer. A committee was also formed. It was decided to meet fortnightly on Thursday evenings during the winter and monthly during the summer. After the election of officers the remainder of the evening was taken up with a demonstration of a new machine, the "U-phone," which presents many interesting new features, notably the elimination of metal from the sound-box. The annual subscription is 5s. per member and 8s. 6d. for lady and gentleman. All musically interested and desirous of joining the society are given a cordial welcome to attend the meetings. Application for membership should be made to Mr. F. Sunderland, 20, North Street, Lockwood, Huddersfield, or for further particulars to Mr. H. A. Shaw, Fair Lea Road, Taylor Hill, Huddersfield, *Hon. Secretary*.

**THE LEICESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The above society had an interesting evening on November 2nd, when a selection of the new records for the month was demonstrated on the new H.M.V. machine, kindly loaned by Messrs. Dalton and Son, Granby Street. As the machine used was only a small one, the general opinion was that judgment should be deferred until we had the opportunity of hearing a larger model in comparison with the society's Columbia table grand, and this is being arranged for a future date. Members were informed that the Vocalion and Parlophone companies were sending a selection of records every month for our use, and this generous co-operation in our work was much appreciated.

An interesting discussion followed on the committee's proposals for the formation of a record library, and eventually a practical scheme was evolved, and it is hoped the library will be a source of interest to all members, and will further strengthen our position as a society, by bringing together a greater number of those interested in recorded music.

By a big majority it was decided that the programme for November 30th should be "My Favourite Record," selected by twenty-four different members from their own collection.

Five new members were enrolled, and a vote of thanks to Messrs. Dalton and Son concluded the meeting.—W. H. ABELL, *Hon. Secretary*, 87, Nansen Road, Leicester.

**LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The lady members have now taken an active and a definite place in the affairs of the society, and their efforts have been marked by well-deserved success. On October 12th Miss J. Kelly presented her second programme, upon which high praise was bestowed. In a record of the *Lento* from the *F minor Quintet* of Franck, by the Lener Quartet and Mme. Loeser-Lebert, the effect of the persistent repetition gives an impression of pent-up emotion and the beautifully placid close is very grateful and soothing. The attempts on the part of some of the modern young men to discredit Meyerbeer is wholly dissipated on hearing the records of two airs from *Les Huguenots*, *Schwur und Schwerterweihe* (Friedrich Schorr), and *Song of the Page* (Fritzi Jokl), both are excellent. To lovers of band records one can recommend the *Rigodon de Dardanus*, by the Grenadiers. Miss Kelly's annotations added much to the interest of the recital.

The first part of the programme for the evening of October 26th was devoted entirely to the compositions of Johann Sebastian Bach, whilst the second part was made up of selections from the

Savoy operas, something of a contrast to be sure, but not so incongruous as might be supposed. The Gilbert and Sullivan selections were carried off with the usual aplomb. Of the Bach items it may be said that they afforded proof—if proof at this time of day is still wanting—that there is in Bach's music, and recorded music, moreover, a profusion of tuneful and readily intelligible stuff that will give pleasure to those of quite simple musical tastes. To Mr. A. E. Parry, who presented the programme, the society are much indebted.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

**MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—General Meeting: This took place on Monday, October 12th, and officers were elected as follows: President and founder, J. Rastall, Esq.; vice-president, E. Timmis, Esq.; hon. secretary and treasurer, Mr. C. J. Brennand; hon. auditor, A. Lea, Esq. Committee: Messrs. Graham, Bond, Puxty, Lloyd, Draine, Wroe, Wood, and Webb.

Amongst our future arrangements are three lectures, a Polydor evening, a friendly visit from representatives of the Liverpool Society, and sundry demonstrations provided by our own members.

The November meeting was held in the Onward Buildings, Deansgate, on Monday the 9th, and consisted of "A Talk on Various Matters Pertaining to the Gramophone," by Mr. E. C. K. Walter, assisted by Mr. F. W. Hambleton.

The lecturer touched first upon the durability of records under fibre, which was incontrovertibly brought home to the audience by the playing of the record *An Old Garden*, sung by Stewart Gardner. This record, although used for test purposes between 700 and 800 times, betrayed practically no trace at all of surface noise or blast. Gogorza's *God My Father* was then used to demonstrate the point that no volume of tone was lacking under fibre for the purpose of home use. A wonderful pianissimo effect was then illustrated by a specially finely-cut fibre needle, showing its unlimited capacity of modulation. Discussing the point of surface noise, the lecturer incidentally showed that the fact of the cabinet lid being open or closed made not the slightest difference in this matter. After valuable discussion of the sound-box and tone-arm, Mr. Walter accompanied most artistically on the American organ the records *Stille Nacht*, etc., sung by Schumann-Heinck, and the hymn *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, and in illustration of *Good Records* provided a delightful piano accompaniment to Gogorza's *Non é ver* and Alma Gluck's *My Old Kentucky Home*. Illustrations of *Poor Records* with over-prominent accompaniments and with faultily emphasised notes were also given. Mr. Walter's lecture, which proved the gramophone's wonderful capacity for entertainment, was delivered throughout in his inimitably humorous and entertaining manner. The instrument used, one of the very latest H.M.V. models, most generously lent by Messrs. Hime and Addison, Deansgate, gave by its superb tone an additional charm and interest to the proceedings.—CECIL J. BRENNAND, *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*.

**NELSON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE MUSIC SOCIETY.**—This society, though only a few months old, is forging rapidly ahead. The second meeting was held on Tuesday evening, October 13th, and took the form of a competition for orchestral records. The records submitted, including such diverse music as selections from *Carmen* and the *Rondo* from the Mozart *Concerto No. 4 in D*, were a valuable indication of the varying tastes of the members. On a vote being taken, Offenbach's *Overture to Orfée aux Enfers*, proved easily the most popular. The two records which tied for second place were a rather incongruous pair—namely, *Maid of the Mountains* selection, played by the Mayfair Orchestra, and Schubert's *Overture to Rosamunde*, by the Court Symphony Orchestra. A new expression of opinion placed *Maid of the Mountains* one vote ahead of its rival, the Schubert thus taking third place, while fourth on the list was the *Rondo* from the Mozart *Concerto in D*, played by Kreisler and the Symphony Orchestra.

The society held its third meeting on Tuesday, October 27th. Mr. C. H. Bateson, a distinguished vice-president, presided over this and spoke of the use of the gramophone in schools and as an aid to the study of musical appreciation. Mr. F. De Luce then gave a very interesting and instructive lecture on "Folk-Music and the Musician," illustrated by recitals on a Columbia Grafonola. He had spared no pains in viewing his subject from many angles, and touched on English folk-song and dance, Scottish folk-songs, including the beautiful music of the Hebrides, the native music of Ireland, and what was a surprise to most of the audience, negro "spirituals." His playing over of a movement from Dvorák's *From the New World Symphony*, in which some of these are



symphonically treated, gave an interesting example of what a composer can do with "raw material."

Mr. De Luce is going to give the society another night later in the season, when he will give examples of folk-music from Finland, Russia, etc. A good programme for the session is now arranged, and those interested are invited to address inquiries and applications to the secretary, Mr. H. C. Wood, 18, Malvern Road, Nelson.—MARGARET E. WADDINGTON.

**RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The annual general meeting was held on Monday, October 19th, Mr. H. C. Sully, hon. secretary, in his report reviewed the many interesting programmes, lectures, etc., which had been presented during the past year. The hon. treasurer, Mr. W. F. Mason, submitted the annual account from which it was noted that the society's financial condition continued satisfactory. Our president, Mr. C. P. Welby Wheeler, the retiring officers, Messrs. H. C. Sully, W. F. Mason, W. R. Stone, and T. Sydney Allen, hon. secretary, treasurer, librarian, and press secretary respectively, were unanimously re-elected for the ensuing year. Miss Severn and Mr. Cheney were elected to fill vacancies in the committee.

The competition for the best orchestral record as judged by the audience resulted in Mr. W. F. Mason securing first place with *O Katharina*, a vivacious little tune perfectly recorded and played by the International Novelty Orchestra. Mr. Cheney was second with the *Prelude to Delibes' Coppélia Ballet* music, played by the London Symphony Orchestra.

As a means of giving the members a special opportunity of judging the Vocalion records, this company has generously undertaken to provide a selection of records at intervals. The records, which were played during the evening, included *La Boutique Fantasque* (Rossini), a robust performance by the Band of H.M. 1st Life Guards; *Lo! here the gentle lark* (Bishop), exquisitely sung by Evelyn Scotney, the coloratura soprano; *Polka Miniature*, Op. 6, composed and played by Wassili Sapellnikoff was much appreciated, whilst Mr. John Buckley's recording of *Ould John Braddlem* in north-country dialect completed a most entertaining programme. The date of the next meetings are November 2nd and 16th.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, Hon. Press Secretary, 32, Deanhill Road, East Sheen, S.W. 14.

**SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—On October 20th we had another opportunity of hearing the Orchorsol instrument. Mr. J. Twible was the obliging member and he took the trouble to bring his large cabinet machine for the demonstration. We have written before of the high esteem in which the Orchorsol is held by our members and on this occasion we had no cause to change our opinion. The high-class programme submitted was in every way up to Mr. Twible's standard and was thoroughly enjoyed, embracing as it did grand opera by such artists as Melba and Caruso, McCormack, Michael Bohnen, Sabine Meyen, and Galli-Curci. In addition to the usual English makes we had Brunswick, Polydor, and Parlophone, etc. After our previous experience we were anxious to hear the Parlophone issues for October which are placed at our disposal by that company, and they really are excellent value. The orchestral records are particularly satisfying and special mention must be made of Beethoven's *Consecration of the House Overture*, played by Dr. Weissmann's Orchestra. Edith Lorand's fine violin record of two Hungarian tunes and the soprano discs are of the best, whilst Marek Weber's records of the two Strauss waltzes are likewise good.

The meeting of November 3rd was of special interest because the "new discovery" of the H.M.V. Co. made its debut. By the courtesy of Messrs. Wilson Peck and Co., we had at our disposal a cabinet model, and the general opinion was that a marked advance in tone has been made. We suppose that by this time everyone will know the principal features. Orchestral reproduction is vastly improved and although in the writer's opinion there may be a trifle too much resonance, this slight disadvantage is more than outweighed by the generally improved tone and volume, and the H.M.V. Co. are to be congratulated on the excellence of the new machine. The Vocalion Co. have also generously promised a selection of their new issues each month, and our best thanks are due to them in helping to increase the usefulness of our meetings. Undoubtedly the "star turn" is the Mozart *Concerto*, and we thoroughly enjoyed all the three records. Sapellnikoff is also represented with a beautiful Chopin *Waltz* and *Spring Night* by Schumann-Liszt, perfectly recorded. Malcolm McEachern is also in splendid voice, whilst the 1st Life Guards Band maintains its high standard in a selection from *I Pagliacci*. Altogether a good list. We also had the pick of the H.M.V., Brunswick and Columbia issues, and space unfortunately forbids our saying about them all

the nice things we would like to.—THOS. H. BROOKS, Hon. Press Secretary.

**TYNESIDE GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—Headquarters, Church Institute, Hood Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Secretary, W. L. Murray Brooks, 70, Pilgrim Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Subscription 5s. per annum. Meetings in 1925: November 16th and 26th; December 7th and 17th. 1926: January 14th and 28th; February 11th and 25th; March 11th and 25th; April 8th. Syllabus, to be had on application to the secretary, includes demonstrations of all leading makes of machines and records, members' competitions, Gilbert and Sullivan night (February 11th). Visitors interested in gramophone matters cordially invited.

A lending library of records has been formed and the secretary acknowledges, with sincere thanks, parcels of records from the Parlophone and Vocalion Companies for demonstration and inclusion in the lending library. These companies have also kindly promised the society a gift of records each month from their bulletins, and the secretary would be grateful to any other company which would do likewise.

**THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—A most interesting operative evening was provided at Clock Tower Chambers, Lewisham, on November 9th, by Mr. H. Lewis. He prefaced the musical programme by a talk on "The Rise of French Opera," and in particular comparing it with Italian opera. On the musical side we had a very fine selection of records; Mr. Lewis gave a brief description of the particular scene which added materially to the enjoyment. There were *Manon* selection, played by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra, and other items from the same opera, of which *With Fancy's Eye*, sung by Cecil Sherwood, and *Obeïssons quand leur voix appelle*, sung by Galli-Curci, must be particularly mentioned. The Aeolian Orchestra played *Carmen Suite*, Edna Thornton gave a beautiful rendition of the *Habañera*, and, of course, Caruso was superb in the *Flower Song*. From Charpentier's *Louise* was selected Alma Gluck's lovely record of *Depuis le jour*, the programme concluding with a magnificent excerpt from *Herodiade*, *Vision Fugitive*, sung by the late William Samuel.

The society is deeply indebted to the Vocalion Company for so kindly sending down for inclusion in the society's library, a selection of their November issues.

On December 14th the annual general meeting takes place and on this occasion there will be a novel competition. The society is extremely grateful to its two patrons, Mr. Compton Mackenzie and Mr. Walter Yeomans, for the interest they take in the society; they have very kindly provided the best prizes as follows:—Mr. Mackenzie: One dozen records (winner's own selection). Mr. Yeomans: The complete *Parsifal* as recorded by H.M.V. The winner of the first prize will have his choice. Incidentally it will be as well for prospective members to join at once for the 1926 competition will be equally valuable and will be awarded for the cumulative efforts of members over the year. All communications to 34, Chalsey Road, Brockley, S.E. 4.—ERNEST BAKER, Honorary Secretary.

**THE BLACKPOOL RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—Our inaugural meeting was held in the Savoy Café on Wednesday, Nov. 4th, at 7.30 p.m., when the chairman (pro tem), Mr. H. Burrows, of Poulton, outlined the aims and ideals of the new society. Briefly these are as follows: (1) To give good-class concerts to the members by the means of the gramophone (and occasionally the player-piano) twice every month or more often if the members so desire. (2) To demonstrate the best selections from the monthly bulletins of records as they are issued. (3) To give demonstrations of new gramophones, new sound-boxes, and other new inventions, gadgets, or adaptations. (4) To form a lending library for the use of members only, of high-class records, our thanks being due to the Vocalion Gramophone Co. for their generous gift of records which will form the nucleus of the library. (5) To give once a month at the least, one complete symphony, sonata, or suite of chamber music available in recorded form.

After the chairman's introductory remarks we had a very fine concert arranged by Mr. Arthur Cook, of Messrs. A. and E. Cook, the well-known Blackpool music dealers. Mr. Cook (who, by the way defrayed the whole cost of the evening's entertainment, including very choicely printed programmes) gave his programme on three different instruments, these being the Super Apollo, the New Edison, and also the new H.M.V. table model. Intending members may write to either Mr. Burrows Poulton or to the writer.—V. P. BARRAUD THOMAS, Hon. Recording Secretary, 73, Bolton Street, Blackpool.



## CORRESPONDENCE

*De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.*

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Friar Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

## AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—You have from time to time organised competitions to ascertain what symphonies or what concertos your readers most desired to have recorded; and the N.G.S. sends us lists of chamber music so that we may write down our preferences. The information so obtained has been interesting and perhaps of some practical effect.

At the same time it would be both interesting and useful to know how the complete works issued by the various companies have actually fared with the public. I suppose that the companies might be reluctant, from competitive reasons, to give us the actual figures of their sales, but the comparative figures for sales in the United Kingdom would be valuable enough.

If, for instance, the *Emperor Concerto* has proved the most popular of the complete works issued by H.M.V., how useful it would be to know how many sets of each of the symphonies, quartets, etc., have been sold for every 100 sets of the *Emperor*. And so, too, with the other companies.

Certain factors would have to be remembered in drawing deductions from such figures. It would be necessary to have the date of first issue, for the sale of good records is steady and continuous. Then again, certain performers are more popular than others, and a few of the complete works we have had have been not well played or not well recorded. And variations of price must affect sales, though the increased cost of "Celebrity" records may be balanced by the fact that "Celebrity" artists command a certain sale whatever the music they record.

But we should, at least, get some idea of which of the works issued have proved comparative failures with the public. To know this is of the utmost importance, for naturally the companies are not likely to proceed with any experiments which have been unsuccessful. Some of us might find that the works we value most have failed to gain the success they deserved. Then it will be up to us to see that these works have an increased sale lest we be told that no more of such things can be issued, for the public will not buy them.

To give an example. Did everyone who is looking forward to the issue uncut of Brahms' *Clarinet Quintet* buy the *Clarinet Trio* which was issued by Columbia—perhaps as a feeler for the quintet? (And incidentally, did every enthusiast for Lieder who wants records of Wolf—for Schubert is not so much neglected nowadays—buy the McCormack record of *Wo find ich Trost*?)

Yours faithfully,

L. J. H. BRADLEY.

Liverpool.

## MEYERBEER.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—It is a pleasure to find someone of Mr. Klein's authority taking up the cudgels on behalf of Meyerbeer. May I be allowed one or two comments?

(1) With all deference, I must disagree with Mr. Klein's judgment of two records—Journet's *Piff, paff* and Hempel's *Robert, toi que j'aime*. I heard both a year or so ago, but did not purchase them. Journet's rendering seemed to me inferior in volume and force to that of Sibirakoff, which I heard at Covent Garden before the war. Memory, of course, is fallacious, but I was disappointed. Hempel's is cut I think, and I noticed a very unpleasant bit of surface towards the end. Three discs which I tried were identical in this respect.

(2) H.M.V. should give us Act IV. of *Les Huguenots* entire with the strongest possible artists. Chorus recording ought to be good enough by now. Further, if they issued the words (in Italian or French and English) with the records, their sales would be greatly increased.

(3) In addition to more vocal records of Meyerbeer (but not more "Shadow songs," let us hope), we need some instrumental records. There is a charming introduction to Act II of *Les Huguenots*, a delightful intermezzo in *Dinorah*, plenty of effective ballet music, the Prelude to *L'Africaine* and the overture to *L'Etoile du Nord*. Let us have this last complete, as pompous as possible, on a military band. But not the "Schiller" march!

Yours etc.,

H. E. HALLIDAY.

Stourbridge.

## WOMEN AND THE GRAMOPHONE.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—At the risk of being too late for the joust, I feel impelled to break a lance in defence of "Ladies versus the Gramophone." It has been more than implied that we cannot appreciate the gramophone. Why should we? To begin with, musical women have very little need of it. Music enters so largely into the education of girls that all the musically inclined gain a creditable proficiency at one instrument at least, very often a working knowledge of a second, and singing if there is any voice to cultivate. With such an equipment coupled with the power of self expression, no small factor in the enjoyment of any art, and the feast of music spread, in the shape of concerts and musical activities of all kinds, what wonder if the humble gramophone fails in the unequal contest?

It is the musically starved male, whose achievement ranges from picking out a tune with one finger on the keyboard to improvising a drone bass to some well-known air, to whom the music of the gramophone comes as springs in a thirsty land; but such is the perversity of human nature, or the levelling impartiality of mother nature, that the musical are wedded to the unmusical; whence much sighing and travail of soul. Great as have been the strides in musical recording, it will take more than three years' output of first-class (I had all but said decent) music to break down the taboo against mechanical reproduction. Mechanical means for so long have made a mechanical music from which the soul of the art shrinks abashed.

A far more important factor to a cultivated musical sense is false tonal values; I do not mean false intonation (*that* has been mastered), but an untrue quality of tone, which acts, or may I say, has acted as a further deterrent, and there is the exacerbation provoked by the break in continuity due to the inevitable turn over and changing. The predominance of women over men at all our schools of music, and among candidates for local and professional honours in music indicates anything but indifference. On the other hand, it is significant that some pundits of musical education are advocating the use of gramophones to provide a more leisured and intimate study of great concerted pieces than is possible by attending concerts, even with the score, or playing in the school orchestra. The gramophone is steadily coming into its own, but a little time and it will win its due place. *Patienza*.

Let T. A. F. take heart. Great art and new forms of art rarely owe their inception to great centres of population. Wagner built his new theatre in Bayreuth, W. B. Yeats and the Abbey Theatre work in Dublin, and Rutland Boughton in Glastonbury. How long did Elgar wait to get a hold on London? Luton is not London, but it is near enough nowadays (forgive the Hibernianism), I fancy, to feel the vortex.

I am, yours truly,

ONE OF THE LADIES.

Quelimane, Portuguese East Africa.

## "LILAC TIME."

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—Since the popularity of "Lilac Time" is so assured, it seems to me that it would be a great boon to gramophone lovers if it is recorded in complete form by one of the companies. The only company that has given us any reasonable scraps is the Vocalion Company, who are fortunate in having secured the original artists. For these records they deserve great praise, but why did they stop? Surely, having got Courtice Pounds, Clara Butterworth, and Percy Hemming it would have been worth their while to produce the whole work. The Columbia and H.M.V. have both brought out the eternal selections, both of which are utterly useless from a musical point of view. Columbia have also issued a good record of *The Flower and The Golden Song*, sung very well by Dora Labbette and Hubert Eisdell, but this is even less than the Vocalion. The H.M.V. Company, for once, seems to have been asleep over the question of "Lilac Time" records, and only contribute a selection,



and a poor one at that. Of course it is possible to get some of the numbers in their original version, but what everyone wants is a complete performance of "Lilac Time," with the original cast, and "a handsome and durable album being presented with every complete set of records." Could not one of the leading recording companies be made to make up for lost time over this question?

"For what is so sweet as a golden song?"

Yours faithfully,

Bristol.

ERLKÖNIG.

#### RECORDING THE ORCHESTRA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—With reference to Mr. Gilman's letter in the October number, may I point out that my note in the September issue was designed merely to correct the impression conveyed in his August communication that, so far as orchestral recording is concerned, the companies are satisfied to employ a mere handful of instrumentalists. Anyway his statement that "It is surely unfair to blame the record for not reproducing what was never put into it, and for giving the impression of a few instruments in a confined space, which is precisely what was recorded" seems definite enough. The italics, of course, are mine. As to the measure of success or otherwise achieved by the companies in this field I made no comment whatever.

I was particularly satisfied to notice Mr. Wilson's reminder that the ease with which an orchestral record enables one to follow the score is not a reliable guide as regards faithfulness to the original performance. This seems a little analogous to the case of some of our friends who appear to have a partiality for brilliance and knife-like definition. To those who follow the good example set by Mr. Gilman and correct their ear from time to time by attendances at orchestral performances it will be obvious that general clarity of definition is not an attribute attaching of necessity to actuality.

Yours faithfully,

Sutton.

R. GOODCHILD.

#### A GUIDE FOR GRAMOPHONE MUSIC.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—With reference to the requests from your readers "for a series of articles explaining and interpreting music, and generally providing some sort of useful knowledge about its growth, constitution, make-up, and meaning," may I suggest that the following books, all of which are worth purchasing, cover the whole of their requirements:—

1. *The Listener's Guide to Music*, by Percy A. Scholes. Oxford University Press. 3s. 6d.—This book covers briefly the whole field of music from a simple tune to a symphony. It is, in my humble opinion, the finest introductory guide to music ever written.

2. *Learning to Listen by means of the Gramophone*, by Percy A. Scholes. Published by the Gramophone Co. 3s.—This little book is not so well known as it might be; it contains an analytical account of the main works of the great composers from Purcell to Elgar, with lists of available records.

3. *The First Book of the Gramophone Record*, by Percy A. Scholes. Oxford University Press.—An idea of the style of this book can be obtained by reference to Mr. Scholes' recent articles in your paper on the records of *L'Après-midi* (Debussy), *A London Symphony* (Vaughan Williams), etc., etc., which are, I believe, incorporated in his "Second Book of the Gramophone Record."

4. *How to Enjoy Music*, by Herbert Antcliffe. Published by Kegan Paul.—This is an excellent elementary treatise on Appreciation.

5. *The Enjoyment of Music*, by A. W. Pollitt. Methuen and Co.—A more advanced aid to musical appreciation and understanding which will appeal to the cultured music-lover.

Yours faithfully,

Sheffield.

H. E. STONE.

#### UNBOOMED RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—A letter from one of your readers in which he gave a list of what he called "unboomed" records... is, I find, an excellent way of finding treasures, and to this purpose I have gone through the H.M.V. and Columbia catalogues. The following are a few found in this way:—

H.M.V., D.B.591: *Crucifix* (Faure), Caruso and Journet; *Les Rameaux* (Faure), Plançon.—This record affords an excellent

comparison between Journet and Plançon—two fine *bassi*. The *Crucifix* is worth the money alone, while the Plançon record is an excellent example of perfect singing allied to imperfect recording.

H.M.V., D.B.676: *Spanish Dance*, No. 8, Op. 26 (Sarasate) and *Zapateado* (Sarasate), played by Kubelik.

H.M.V., D.B.447: *Prize Song and Lohengrin's Narrative*, sung by the late Evan Williams.—The pick of the recordings of these two. Why is this splendid tenor comparatively unknown? His records are all beautiful, especially D.B.466 and D.B.416.

Col. L.1465: *Andante* from Haydn's *Quartet in F major* and *Lento* from Dvorák's *Quartet in F major*, played by the Lener Quartet. The best record for beginners—as clear as crystal; recording excellent.

Col. 7339: *Deh vieni* and *Caro Nome*, sung by Maria Barrientos. After hearing this record one wonders at the people who say "Galli-Curci for coloratura singing."

Col. 7342: *Celeste Aida* and *Salve Dimora*, sung by Hipolito Lazaro.—Can any reader find me any better record of *Celeste Aida*, barring Caruso, who misses out the recitative?

Col. A.5192: *Ave Signor* from *Mefistofèle* and *Piff paff* from *Les Huguenots*.—Col. A.5200: *La Calunnia* from *Barber of Seville* and *Serenade* from *Faust*.—These two are the pick of the Mardones records. This singer has a voice of different quality from Norman Allin and in the *Piff paff* aria he goes from low F to high G, a remarkable range for a *basso cantante*.

Yours faithfully,

Invercargill, New Zealand.

PHILIP MARCHANT.

#### POLYDOR RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Lack of space does not allow me to give details of the many good things to be found in the Polydor catalogue, but I append a list of real gems which I feel sure all gramophiles would be glad to possess.

ORCHESTRAL.—*Peer Gynt Suite No. 1* (65876/7); Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* (65914/5), *Rienzi* (65879/80), and *Tannhäuser* (65916/7) overtures; *Tristan Prelude* (65917/8), *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1* (65906/7), and with the latest issues Schumann's *First and Strauss' Alpine Symphonies*.

VOCAL.—Jadlowker: *Gute Nacht* (Schubert); *Erstarrung* (Schubert). Groenen: *Gesang Weyla's (Wolf)*; *Fussreise* (Wolf). Schlussnus: All the Wolf and Strauss records. Schorr: *Wahn Monolog*, *Meistersinger*; *Schusterlied*, *Meistersinger*; *Schwur und Schwerterweihe*, *Hugenotten*; *Wie aus der Ferne*, *Dutchman*; (with Kurt) *Versank ich Jetzt*, *Dutchman*. Schwarz: *Lied an den Abendstern*, *Tannhäuser*; *Blick' ich umher*, *Tannhäuser*; *Im Kahne* (Grieg); *Ein Schwan* (Grieg). Bender: *Der Wanderer* (Schubert); *Der Mummelsee* (Loewe); *Der Nöck* (Loewe). Mayr: *O Isis und Osiris*, *Zauberflöte*; *In diesen heiligen Hallen* (Mozart). Culp: *Ave Maria* (Schubert); *Heimweh* (Wolf). Hafgren-Dinkela: *Ariadne auf Naxos* record. Leider: *Isolde's Liebestod*, *Tristan*; *Dich teure Halle*, *Tannhäuser*. Schumann: All the Mozart records. Leisner: *Aus der Tiefe des Grams*, *Achilleus* (Bruch). Olszewska: *Träume* (Wagner); *Schmerzen* (Wagner). Oegin: *Erbarme dich*, *St. Matthew* (Bach); *Erda's Warning*, *Rheingold* (Wagner); *Einsam wachend*, *Tristan* (Wagner); *Wallraute's Tale*, *Götterdämmerung* (Wagner); *Prediger Salomo* (Brahms); Kurt and Schorr: *Flying Dutchman* duet (65622). Lehmann and Schlussnus: *Reich mir*, *Don Juan* (Mozart); *So lang' hab ich*, *Figaro* (Mozart). Leider and Melchior: *Du bist der Lenz*, *Walkure* (Wagner); *Wie dir die Stirn*, *Walkure* (Wagner). Schorr and Helgers: *Wie? Hort ich recht?*, *Dutchman* (Wagner); *Mich ruhrst dein Los*, *Dutchman* (Wagner).

PIANO.—Kempff: *Vorspiel zur Ratswahlkantate* (Bach); *Italienisches Konzert* (Bach); *Bagatelle* (Beethoven); *Eccossaises* (Beethoven).

The list of pianoforte and violin records available is very small, but amongst the recent issues do not overlook a superb violin record of Beethoven's *Romance*, by Wolfsthal, and in view of the wonderful Kempff records above mentioned, I look forward keenly to the promised issue this month of five more Beethoven sonatas. I endorse Mr. Mackenzie's appreciation of Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony*, Haydn's *Farewell*, and No. 88, Beethoven's *Fourth* and *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (Strauss), and feel sure if Mr. Mackenzie will hear some of the records mentioned in the above list he will modify his criticism of the Polydors, especially the vocal records.

Yours faithfully,

London, S.E. 23.

P. F. BINGHAM.



## POLYDOR RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—No doubt this is but one voice in a large chorus of dissenters from the article on Polydor records in the October issue. I have imported over one hundred vocal and instrumental and not one is recorded badly enough to detract from the value of the record. In fact, I have found a lesser percentage of "duds" among Polydors than among any other make which I import. I cannot understand your disappointment with the vocal records. I certainly would be most loath to part with records such as Onegin's aria from the *St. Matthew Passion* or the *Four Serious Songs* of Brahms. Other readers have spoken about Schlusnus, Bohnen, Van Endert, etc., so I will single out for mention Schorr, who has made some fine records, Stückgold, Färber-Strasser, Olszewska, Schützendorf (whose *Boris* record I prefer to Chaliapin's), and Dobert, who has made some glorious records of Bach and Handel arias. The Leider-Melchior duet from *Walküre* is excellent, and exactly fills the gap between the two sides of H.M.V. record No. D.679.

That I am not prejudiced in favour of these records because of the amount of music not obtainable elsewhere, is proved by the fact that I have compared several orchestral records with other recordings of the same selection, and in most cases Polydor came out on top. While I have the greatest admiration for Mr. Coates, his *Jupiter Symphony* must give way to that of Herr Heidenreich. Compare particularly the pedestrian interpretation of the former with the poetry of the latter in the *andante*. I have found Beethoven's *Fourth Symphony*, the *Flying Dutchman Overture*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream* music superior to the Parlophone records. As far as recording goes, it would be hard to beat the Columbia record of the *Night on a Bare Mountain*, but the Polydor is fully up to this standard and is complete, whereas the Columbia is shamefully treated in the matter of cutting. This work, by the way, was orchestrated by Rimsky-Korsakov.

New York.

Very truly yours,  
HENRY S. GERSTLÉ.

## PUZZLED.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—When hearing the first of the new recordings, on plum label H.M.V., *Rustic Wedding Symphony*, etc., it appeared to me to embody potential promise, by reason of its greater "clarity," breadth, and range. But the tone! Zeus! O, ye circus round-about organs! O, ye Italian accordions! O, ye screeching Chinese mothers-in-law! And when this terribly strident tone invaded the black label—our beloved Albert Hall Orchestra in *La Boutique Fantasque*, *Midsummer Night's Dream Nocturne*, and now the *Parsifal* records! I thought my old records would be worth only the "pudding" price of 6d. each; now it's the reverse. Or am I a real "realist," or am I "kidding" myself? Say something, O confrères, or pinch me.

Yours etc.

"INDICATOR."

## WAGNER RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In addition to the records of the *Ring* mentioned by Mr. Haworth on pages 285-6, there ought to be available two further scenes from the *Valkyrie*, viz., the Combat between Siegmund and Hunding from Act 2, and the Assembly of the Valkyries, from Act 3. The disc containing them is numbered D.946, and a description appears in the book, "Opera at Home," but from what I understand are technical reasons the issue has been postponed. Perhaps this state of things could be altered if sufficient fuss is made.

Brixton.

Yours faithfully,  
S. F. D. HOWARTH.

## MILITARY BAND MUSIC.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I noted with pleasurable interest Mr. Lionel T. Ems' notes on military band music in the October Forum, and would like to add a few notes thereto. I possess a number of very excellent items of this class, in addition to many that Mr. Ems mentions, and if he, or any other readers interested in military band music (and there is something dreadfully fascinating in the precision of

the conducting, excellence of the tone of the various instruments, and verve with which they are played) I would suggest the following, all characterised by full, rich playing, not blatantly loud, and bringing out the peculiarly entrancing features of the military band: *The Celtic Suite* (Foulds), 12in., H.M.V. (Coldstream Guards); *Capriccio Italien* (Tchaikovsky), 12in., Velvet Face (Scots Guards); "1812" *Overture* (Tchaikovsky), 12in., Columbia (Grenadiers); *A Musical Switch* (Alford), 12in., H.M.V. (Coldstream); *March of the Mountain Gnomes* (Eilenberg), 10in., Columbia (Granadiers); *William Tell Overture* (Rossini), 12in., Velvet Face (Scots Guards); *Tales of Hoffman Selection*, (Offenbach), 12in., Vocalion (First Life Guards); *A Musical Jigsaw* (Aston), 12in., H.M.V. (Coldstream); *Marche Militaire* (Schubert) and *Light Cavalry Overture* (Suppé), 12in., Vocalion (First Life Guards). In arranging a programme of military band music I usually sprinkle a few vocal items, by Clara Butt, Kirkby Lunn, Robert Radford, Leila Megane, etc., winding up with the Empire Day speech of their Majesties the King and Queen, and the absolutely terrific *God Save the King* of Clara Butt and the Coldstream Guards Band, and sometimes, when inclined to that unhappy state described by a recent correspondent as "factitious and fictitious lachrymosity," I wind up with *Auld Lang Syne*, by Melba and the Coldstream. I am quite sure that not only Mr. Ems but many other readers would greatly enjoy the items mentioned. True the vocal parts get of necessity somewhat powerfully patriotic, but in these days of "communising" that won't hurt anyone overmuch. I should like to close with a recognition of the great usefulness of the Military Band Record Reviews, by W. A. C.; they are very good. More power to his elbow.

St. Helens.

Yours faithfully,  
JAMES RAINFORD.

## QUIS CUSTODES CUSTODIET?

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Who is to criticise the critics? In the October issue (page 246) Mr. Wilson, greatly daring, ventured on a few practical and courteous worded suggestions for the consideration of the record reviewers, and this month we have Mr. Chapman, usually so sane and interesting, writing about "N. P." as though he were a religion and claiming for him an immunity from criticism and an infallibility such as was in one heroic instance denied even to Mr. Ernest Newman. To show how tastes may differ, I have personally got to the point with "N. P." that when he slates anything I immediately go and order it. This is not to say that I fail to appreciate the literary value of his excellent reviews, but it is one thing to admire a critic's style and another to agree with all his verdicts. Take, for instance, Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*. Of this vivid and interesting work "N. P." wrote in the May number that the rendering was not up to the standard of our premier companies, the first movement being wanting in delicacy, and so forth, while of the *Scène aux Champs*, surely one of the most original and poetic movements ever written, he could find it possible to opine that it was "a dullish piece of work." So far as the recording goes my own impression was that never before had the ethereal quality of the massed strings in their higher register been more nearly suggested on records, and many good judges, including our Editor, were of opinion that on the whole it was the best orchestral recording that had been done up to that time. Again, in last month's issue, "N. P." finds the charming *Andante* to Mozart's No. 13 *Quartet* "extremely tedious and undistinguished." In support of this novel theory he asks us to play over the final cadence some four or five times! promising that we shall then find it "banal." This cinematographic test is surely something quite new in musical criticism and might be applied, one would imagine, to some of the other arts with similarly disillusioning results.

No one could fail to appreciate the high literary and musical standard maintained by your reviewers, but apart from this their chief value lies in the assistance rendered to those who for geographical or other reasons are unable to hear and choose their own records, and I therefore agree with Mr. Wilson that it is most important that sufficient stress should be laid on the merits of records as such, apart from the music.

I doubt, for instance, whether the reviewer of the latest Lener realises that in his enthusiasm for Beethoven's work he has been far too kind to the playing and recording, which are of the feeblest. Even the recording of the first violin is nothing great, while the rest of the members of the Quartet are like Kempenfelt's brave men "all sunk beneath the wave."

Purley.

Yours truly,

LIONEL GILMAN.



## NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(350) **Xylopins.**—Being satisfied with fibre needles so far as absence of wear on record, volume, tone, etc., but dissatisfied with their uncertainty, I wish to try Xylopin wood needles, but would like to be certain that they do not damage the record as steel do. Are they as satisfactory in this regard, as fibre?—R. L. P., Broadview, S. Australia.

[Yes.—Ed.]

(351) **Organ Records.**—I have never seen any mention made of the organ records played by Easthope Martin on page 154 of the H.M.V. catalogue in these columns. I should be greatly obliged if any reader could give me some information regarding them, as I wish to purchase some of the records if they are satisfactory.—D. W. C., Salisbury

[I don't recommend them. They are like most organ records, very disappointing.—"Piccolo."]

(352) **Translations Wanted.**—Please give the words and translations of "Wohin?" and "Das Lied im Grünen," also "Feldeinsamkeit"—E. M. W.

[A translation of "Wohin?" is given in the December Supplement, 1923 (vol. i.) and of "Feldeinsamkeit" on page 175 of Vol. II. (October, 1924).—Ed.]

(353) **Ghost Voices.**—Has anyone heard Coates shout "Horns!" in the last record of "The Twilight of the Gods"?—C. F. B., S.E. 7.

(354) **Ghost Voices.**—In the middle of one side of a Beethoven symphony I feel sure I can hear a voice say "Largo" or "Lager." I purposely refrain from giving greater information as I wish readers to play through the nine symphonies of the various makes at their dealers.—H. E. A., Braintree.

(355) **Needles.**—I should be glad to learn if any tests have been made as to the wear of records under the Edison Bell Chromic (loud) needle, and also whether it is advisable to use the needle on the full ten sides. On my small machine fitted with Peridulce sound-box adjusted to give 45 needle angle, I find that the Chromic gives a richer and more natural reproduction with every class of record than any of the many other needles I have tried, and on a good record surface it seems to glide in a soft and silky manner.—L. N. R., Melbourne.

(356) **"Gramophone Nights."**—Does "Gramophone Nights" (Compton Mackenzie) published, I believe, at 5s., contain information as to high-priced records only or are all prices included?—S. B. B.

["Gramophone Nights" contains information as to records of all sorts. Now, of course, it should be supplemented with information in the numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE which have appeared since its publication.—Ed.]

(357) **Historical Records.**—(See September, p. 198.) Dame Emma Albani made three 10in. records in addition to her 12in. 03014. They were 53325: "Ombra mai fu" Handel, "Home Sweet Home," and, I think, "Robin Adair." She also made some Pathé records. Debussy accompanied Mary Garden in the following: 33447, "Chanson de Melisande"; 33449: "Anette No. 1"; 33450: "Anette No. 3"; 33451, "Anette No. 4." Sarah Bernhardt made 31171, "La Samaritaine," Rostand; 31103, "Phèdre," Racine; 31170, "Le Lac," Maurice Bernhardt. Grieg made three 10in. records, 35509, 35510, 35517. I do hope that you will start the collectors' corner you suggest.—M. H., Thirsk.

(358) **Richard Strauss.**—(See September, p. 183.) There is also a fine recording of "Ständchen" by Frieda Hempel on Edison "Recreation" 82269. This is coupled (on the same side) with "The Virgin's Lullaby" by Max Reger, also rendered by the same artist. "Der Rosenkavalier" waltz is rendered by Arnand Vecsey's orchestra on Edison 80730.—H. G., Oldham.

(359) **Beethoven's Symphonies.**—The version of the Seventh conducted by Coates and which was never issued in this country, now appears in the French catalogue on four discs, Nos. W.437-438, W.480-481, that is two parts to each movement, and even then is

apparently incomplete. As things are at present it seems that records become in a general way out-of-date almost daily, and that in the case of several recorded examples of the same subject, it pays to "wait and see" even in the present situation where the whole nine are available. It is also calculated to deprive reviewers of their speech, or at any rate of their superlatives.—S. F. D. H., Brixton.

(360) **Piano Records.**—The apparent "tinniness" of the new De Pachmann records is no doubt due to the piano employed, but at any rate if a fibre needle is used the effect is quite natural, and we should not grumble as under the new system one now obtains full value of the whole keyboard. I agree that in the case of the "Ballade in G minor" it is manifestly absurd to commence half-way through the piece, thus going at one swoop right back to primitive recording days.—S. F. D. H., Brixton.

(361) **Lieder Singing.**—I cannot say whether McCormack is an ideal singer of lieder, as it is a subject upon which we have very little to pass a judgment, but it undoubtedly does require a special study in the same way that oratorio does, and the examples made available, first by Elena Gerhardt and more recently through the medium of the Polydor catalogue, show us this; and it may explain why there are hardly any records at all in the English catalogues of Schubert's songs, especially by native singers, and we have in default had to condone instrumental arrangements.—S. F. D. H., Brixton.

(362) **Record Wanted.**—Could any reader or dealer supply Zonophone 1918 "My Heart's Best Love," Hatherley-Clarke, or good secondhand disc of previous recording by quartet?—R. K., Belfast.

(363) **Best Version.**—Could you kindly tell me which is the best recording of the "Air for G String" (Bach), either played by violin or orchestra?—D. W. C., Salisbury.

[Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, H.M.V., D.684.—"Piccolo."]

(364) **Archaeology.**—(1) When was the first recording machine invented? (2) Are the old cylinder records still obtainable? (3) Did Mario Lablache, Grisi, and Trebelli record for them or any other type of recording machine? (4) Did Mario create the rôle of Faust in Gounod's opera?—T. E. R., Grenoble, France.

[(1) In 1856, by M. Léon Scott. It recorded, but did not reproduce. The Edison Phonograph (1878) was the first to record and reproduce as well. A good many years elapsed before phonographs were fitted with spring motors to allow records to rotate uniformly and so reproduce music with success; early recordings were of speech. (2) Old wax cylinders exist only in private collections, and perhaps, in places, among dealers' old stocks. Modern wax cylinders only give the latest "hits"; celluloid cylinders (Blue Amberols) are still issued by the Edison Co. (3) No. (4) No. At its première in Paris (Théâtre-Lyrique, 1859) the rôles of Marguerite, Faust, and Mephistopheles were created by Mme. Miolan-Carvalho and MM. Barbot and Balanqué. When first produced at the Paris Opéra the artists were Christine Nilsson and MM. Colin and Faure respectively.—"Piccolo."]

(365) **Some Recent Polydors.**—The following are well worth the enhanced duty prices: Beethoven's Symphony No. 2; Stravinsky's "L'Oiseau de Feu" (this contains on Part 4 the "berceuse" and "finale" which are missing from our H.M.V. set); Strauss' "Alpine" Symphony; Beethoven's Trio, Op. 97 (N.G.S. members, please note!).—E. S. G., Bristol.

(366) **Some Climate** (see August, page 138).—I should like to explain that the drying agent I mentioned (asbestos wool and anhydrous calcium chloride) is used under the lid of my H.M.V. pleated diaphragm machine, table model; I am afraid of the damp affecting the parchment diaphragm. With ordinary machines no one here seems to take any precautions, and the only deterioration is the rapid dulling of the nickel-plating. The H.M.V. model has an advantage with its gold plating.—J. D. T., Vera Cruz, Mexico.

(367) **Polydors.**—I always wonder whether users of Polydor records realise the importance of differentiating between the speed of the old H.M.V. series and the newest ones. The former will only give good results at 78, the latter at 80. The old ones are marked "...42..." for men's voices, "...43..." for women's voices, "...44..." for concerted voices, "...45..." for orchestras, etc., "...47..." and "...48..." for instrumental. The left hand spaces are not necessarily filled.—A. A., Siena, Italy.

(368) **Ruffo's Records.**—These are, in my opinion, Titta Ruffo's best records, though it is exceedingly difficult to make distinction



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## Sometimes the Wisest

of us needs advice—even in that particular section of affairs in which we are extraordinarily well versed. The London Editor of this Magazine, whose chief study is concerned with gramophones, recently admitted, in an article in the *Morning Post*, that he sometimes sought advice in the purchase of records. This he said he was in the habit of obtaining from

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between any of his records as they are all excellent (all H.M.V.): "Pagliacci" prologue, D.B.464 (in my opinion the best record of the prologue in existence); "Largo al Factotum" ("Barber of Seville") and "Dio possente" ("Faust"), D.B.405; "Credo" ("Otello") and "Si, pel ciel" (duet with Caruso), D.K.114; "Canzone del Toreador" ("Carmen," with chorus) and "Adamastor, re delle acque profonde" ("Africana"), D.B.406; "Eri tu" ("Ballo in Maschera") and "O de' verd' anni miei" ("Ernani"), D.B.398; "Cortigiani, vil razza" ("Rigoletto") and "Deh, non parlare" ("Rigoletto," duet with Finzi-Magrini), D.B.175; "Era la notte" ("Otello") and "Marechiaro, D.B.404; "Son sessant' anni" ("Andrea Chénier") and Meriggiana, D.A.351; "Pari siamo" ("Rigoletto") and "L'onore! ladri!" ("Falstaff"), D.B.402; "Dunque ho sognato" and "Aman lassù le stelle" ("Cristoforo Colombo"), H.M.V. D.B.179; "Cosa fai tu qui" ("Damnation of Faust") and "All'erta, marinar" ("Africana"), D.A.164; "Deh, vieni alla finestra" and "Fin ch'han dal vino" ("Don Giovanni"), D.A.357.—H. C. H., Dublin.

[The "Cristoforo Colombo" airs are dull; the "Toreador Song" lacks the first verse and is to my mind inferior to many other Ruffo records; and I should not rank D.B.175 so highly. Ruffo's rendering of "Dio possente" is rather stodgy. A splendid Ruffo not in the above list is "Nemico della patria" ("Andrea Chénier"), with "The Two Grenadiers," D.B.242; another is "Pauvre martyr obscur" ("Patrie") and "O casto fior" ("Re di Lahore"), D.B.401.—"Piccolo."]

(369) **Old Recordings.**—(1) I should like to know whether Hans Richter, Anton Rubenstein, Pauline Lucca, Piatti, Ternina, Sims Reeves, Myra Hess, Liza Lehmann, and Seymour Hicks have made any records. (2) Did (a) Van Rooy only make the one record quoted in H.M.V. catalogue No. 2; (b) Gadski only the duets quoted in the Celebrity section; (c) Nikisch only the H.M.V. and Polydor records; (d) Dame Ellen Terry only the one record in H.M.V. catalogue No. 2; (e) Destinn only the few records in H.M.V. and Columbia? (3) Did any of the ancient Covent Garden singers make any records? (4) Are Edouard de Reszke's records available?—G. T. W., Ealing.

[(1) As regards first seven names, No; (2a) No, but his other records are cancelled (one in Victor No. 2 list); (2b) No, she made many records, of which 60 are given in Victor No. 2 list; (2c) I think so; (2d) No, there are four in Victor No. 2 list; (2e) No, she made many more, especially for H.M.V. and Odeon, of which some Odeons are still available and a good many old recordings are also listed in Victor No. 2 list. (3) Too vague. (4) No.—"Piccolo."]

(370) **Fibres.**—About a fortnight ago I purchased a Chaliapine record, D.A.100, 10in. On one side is "Galitzky's Song" and on the reverse "In the town of Kasan." I heard this record played in the shop with fibre needles and everything was all serene. When I got it home I went over it again with fibres and everything was quite all right. The next time I played it, about half way through "In the town of Kasan" the point went. I tried it about seven or eight times and it went wrong each time. These were ordinary H.M.V. fibres I was using, so I bought some Wild's fibres, but lo and behold, if it hasn't turned these points up at first playing! I wonder if you can account for it, or if any of your readers have had the same experience. I am reluctant to change the record as it is such a beauty.—G. D., Leeds.

[It is not possible to be sure of the cause without looking at the record. I suspect that the root of the trouble is debris from the oiled H.M.V. fibres. Possibly also the cutter has become blunted. Try the following: (1) Test the machine for level. Put the sound-box and needle down on the blank portions of the record (outside and inside) and see if the tone-arm swings inwards. If so put some packing under the machine on the left-hand side until there is no inward swing. (2) Be sure that the tone-arm doesn't stick at any point across the record. (3) If these are all right play the record through with a fresh point and if it breaks note the place on the record where the break occurs. Then resharpen the point and start playing again from just before that place, being careful to put the needle gently on to the record. Do this a few times. If there is any obstruction in the groove this should clear it. Use a hard fibre for this.—P. W.]

(371) **The Fibre's Waterloo?**—Is there any fibre needle which will stand up to H.M.V., D.1018, "La Boutique Fantasque"? The weight on my Algrete is only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  oz., and I have tried fibres plain and doped and Xylopins; but not one has yet reached the end of one side of this record.—K. L., Virginia Water.

(372) **Composer's Name.**—Can you tell me the composer of "To us a child is born" (arr. by Dr. Terry), sung by the Westminster

Cathedral Choir (H.M.V. E.140), and of the words of the Old French Carol on the reverse?—F. V. D., Darjeeling.

(373) **Soft or Loud?**—I believe it is generally agreed that loud needles wear records more rapidly than do soft ones. Consequently one uses soft needles so that records will bear a few dozen playings at least, but I find that vocal records are apt to sound woolly and much of the real brilliance is lost. Undoubtedly loud needles produce a more realistic result, especially when the gramophone is placed in another room with the door (or doors) left slightly ajar. You may argue that this proceeding is rather inconvenient, but the compensation lies in the wonderful results possible. Again, many people are unable to endure Ruffo with a loud needle in an average room, so a soft needle is used and much of his rich tone and volume is lost. Would it be possible to use soft needles, increase the size of the tone-arm and horn, and still obtain the same results as loud needles? Probably a thick needle about half an inch long, with a fine point, but the latter *not* tapering from the body, would answer all purposes. Needles have been much discussed, but are highly important.—I. T., Swindon.

[The Columbia medium needle is intermediate between H.M.V. loud and H.M.V. medium. But I think I. T. would probably get all he wants (he doesn't say what machine he uses) if he were to use the "Lifebelt" with a Petmecky needle. I agree that it is better to listen to a gramophone in the next room. By that means you use the room in which the gramophone is played as a huge resonating chamber. A large amplifier, of course, will give greater volume if it is properly designed.—P. W.]

(374).—I have an H.M.V. large cabinet grand gramophone and a large selection of Celebrity records, and up to the present time have used H.M.V. loud tone steel needles exclusively. I like volume in music, but with powerful voices such as Caruso, Zanelli, Knüpfer, etc., the high notes possess an ear-splitting tendency which is not very agreeable. On the other hand, I have lately tried H.M.V. medium-toned needles, which certainly reduce this trouble, but in my opinion you sacrifice voice, and that thrilling ring which is possessed by some of the world's greatest voices is almost lost. Fibres are altogether too dull and lifeless for me, and I think their woolly tone very unnatural. Do you know of a really good steel needle on the market which in tone comes between H.M.V. loud and medium?—M. D., Bradford.

[Try Columbia medium; see reply to I. T.—P. W.]

(375) **Some Problems.**—(a) It seems to me that 3-ply is not the ideal for horn material, as the cross grains will tend to damp out the vibrations.

[The deduction is not sound. Three-ply under strain does not damp out vibrations so much as solid wood. It sometimes reinforces them rather uncomfortably.—P. W.]

(b) Should not a line from the centre of tone-arm bearing to needle tip be in alignment? If it be not, part of the frictional force between needle and record will be against the side of the groove.

[That is the ideal, but it can't be realised with a swinging tone-arm. Fortunately, it is possible to cancel side pressure by levelling the machine dynamically. See my article in issue for March, 1925.—P. W.]

(c) I understand that the great variation of linear speed in the standard record is bad from a recording point of view besides wearing quickly at the outside. Therefore is not linear control as embodied in the (late) World Controller doubly desirable?

[The difficulty is that constant linear speed means variable angular momentum, and it is through the latter that energy is transferred from the turntable through the diaphragm into sound. The mechanical fallacy of the controller is easily seen thus: A motor is capable of giving up a certain quantity of energy, viz., that which you put into it when you wind it up. If it takes longer to give up that quantum of energy, it gives up less per second and consequently the energy available for any particular note or number of notes is smaller. With the controller the same amount of energy was distributed over ten minutes, playing as the ordinary record devotes to three or four minutes. Moreover, there was greater loss in friction, etc. Further, when linear speed is slow, the groove is more wavy and a greater part of the energy exerted by the record on the needle is expended in a direction parallel to the diaphragm and so is lost so far as reproduction is concerned. I doubt whether this system of recording will ever succeed. Its only hope lies in a powerful motor and a greater linear speed than we have hitherto had.—P. W.]



(d) Have you yet completely fathomed blast? I once saw it explained that it was due to the mica lamina separating. Does it occur to the same extent with an aluminium or composite diaphragm? Or is it due to a coincidence of the sound-wave and the diaphragm oscillation period?—B. W., Harrogate.

[Blast may be due to a variety of causes both in recording and reproducing. See Mr. Balmain's article in the issue for December, 1924.—P. W.]

(376) **Needle Screws.**—The threads of the stylus bars in which the needle screws fit have become stripped in three of my sound-boxes. How has it happened? I always screw my needles very tightly. I use fibres.—H. E. S., Sheffield.

[This is not uncommon. The threads are very fine and will not stand much pressure, particularly if you do not screw up with a pure turning movement. When tightening take care that you only twist the screw and do not pull it or press it in any way. You ought to have no difficulty in getting slightly larger screws fitted at your dealer's.—P. W.]

(376) **To Increase Resonance.**—In your September issue, on page 189, you were good enough to insert a few notes from me, describing a simple experiment for increasing resonance. The experiment was so simple—balancing the gramophone on glass jars—that it has, quite naturally, escaped further comment. Still, I can assure any readers who may feel interest in the matter that the results are sufficiently striking, and—this is the sole reason of my writing again—they are in the same direction as the results attained by the *Lifebelt* gadget described in last month's editorial. That is to say, resonance is increased, and sound is resolved. Use both together, and the result should give satisfaction.—H. H. E., Sanderstead.

(377) **Wagner Records.**—I thought perhaps some of your correspondents (and especially Mr. Wilfrid B. Haworth) would like to know that the English versions of the "Mastersingers" and the "Ring" as recorded by His Master's Voice, are the translations by Frederick Jameson. They are published by Schott and Co.; the "Mastersingers" at 2s. and the whole of the "Ring" at 5s. They are both well worth having if only to read through, but with them one is able to follow and hear every word that is sung—except perhaps in the Riot Scene of the "Mastersingers," when David is pummelling Beckmesser.—J. G., Sonning Common.

(378) **Scriabine's "Divine Poem."**—Can any of the gramophone companies be induced to record this work, possibly the finest "modern" composition that has been produced... especially if Mr. Albert Coates were to be in charge of the baton?—K. D., Addingham.



## ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Answers must be written on separate slips and should be forwarded to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, as early in the month as possible.]

(325) **Etoile du Nord.**—Plançon's record sung in French is in the Victor catalogue of withdrawn records and can be obtained through the Gramophone Co., price \$1.50, single-sided, No. 85124.—T. E. R., Grenoble.

(332) **Mignon.**—Has W. I. H., Ware, tried Scotney (Voc. A0211) in "Io son Titania"?—F. P., Manchester.

(343) **Best Records.**—"Peer Gynt Suite No. 1" (Grieg). An exceedingly fine recording of this is on two Columbia discs (L.1516-17, 12in., Light Blue Label), played by the New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra, conducted by Alick Maclean. I do not know whether the rather unusual tubular bells in the "Dance of the Imps" will meet with approval—otherwise I do not think a better all-round recording could be found, although, perhaps, the H.M.V. records (D.156-7, 12in., Black Label), by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra deserve mention and might perhaps be preferred to the former. As regards "Orphée aux Enfers" overture (Offenbach), the Court Symphony Orchestra on Columbia (476, 12in., Dark Blue label) is a good and satisfactory rendering, and I can also recommend Velvet Face (566, 12in.) by the Royal Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Dan Godfrey, as another splendid recording.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(343) Undoubtedly the best records of "Tannhäuser Overture" are the Victor records by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, obtainable from the Gramophone Exchange, New Oxford Street, London. The Brunswick records have a very spirited rendering of "Orphée aux Enfers" by the Capital Grand Orchestra, but it is slightly "cut": I do not know a "complete" recorded version of this overture.—E. H. McG. L., Burnley.

[I can also recommend the Brunswick record.—"Piccolo."]

(346) (1) Caruso, H.M.V. D.B.114. (2) Martinelli, H.M.V. D.B.334.—"Piccolo."

(347) **Beethoven's Appassionata Sonata.**—Played by Wilhelm Kempff, Polydor, Nos. 6603-4-5.—G. G., Richmond.

[Also recommended by E. S. G., Bristol.]

(348) Try Messrs. Ascherberg, Hopwood and Crew, Ltd., or the Italian publishers, Messrs. E. Sonzogno, of Milan.



## BOOK REVIEW

**THE WELL-TEMPERED MUSICIAN. A Musical Point of View.** By Francis Toye, with a Preface by Hugh Walpole. (Methuen, 5s. net.)

The *Morning Post* is to be congratulated on having secured the services of such an excellent, common-sense music critic as Mr. Francis Toye, the author of this little book. It is, as Mr. Hugh Walpole says in his preface, essentially for the plain man; who is to be differentiated from the man in the street as "one who is definitely interested in the Arts, is busy with some occupation that forces him to give those Arts only his leisure time." To such a one the chapters on the "Nature and Functions of Music" and "Music and Modern Society" will especially appeal. A wise eclecticism is what Mr. Toye would wish us to possess, so that we shall perceive the essential unity of all music and not confine ourselves to the appreciation of one or two composers only. People cannot understand that it is possible to admire, for instance, both Gluck and Gershwin; or they hold that because a work is written by a great composer, or one living in the age of the classics, it must necessarily be good: that it would indeed be almost profane to label it as dull and uninspired. Away with such artistic snobbery! Listen to Mr. Toye: "the ultimate value of *Oh, listen to the Band or Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road*, or the latest ingenious specimen of rhythmical impertinence by Mr. Confrey or Mr. Gershwin seems to me greater than that of some purely conventional symphonies and piano or violin concertos. The spark which kindles musical emotion is present, in however rudimentary a form, in the first, and is totally absent in the second." Apart from the sentimental ballad which, frankly, I find insupportable, there is surely room for all kinds of music, each good of its own genre, in the house of music.

Again, Mr. Toye is excellent on the dangers of the over-intellectualisation of the art and the over-estimation of its moral benefits. Every page of the book has something on it to quote from, something that causes one to chuckle a sympathetic approval.

But I disagree with him, as once before, on the teaching value of the gramophone. To begin with, the statement that "the balance of the bass instruments always remains deficient" is now out of date, and, while records of the orchestra leave much to be desired, instrument differentiation, tonal contrasts, and the general illusion, are steadily becoming more marked.

I contend that the gramophone is more than "an adjunct, an aid to memory, a useful makeshift"; it is the finest aid to study, intensive or recreative, that exists. Well, there is my little grumble; the rest is grateful thanks to Mr. Toye for a most enjoyable and stimulating book.

N. P.

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# MAHLER'S RESURRECTION SYMPHONY

## (No. 2 in C minor)

[Communicated]

**G**USTAV MAHLER was born on July 7th, 1860, at Kalischt, in Bohemia, and was educated in Prague and Vienna. In 1886 he went to Leipzig to assist Nikisch and conducted for six months in that city. In 1888 he undertook the direction of the opera at Pesth, and in 1891 moved to Hamburg, remaining there till 1897. He came to London in 1892 to conduct at Covent Garden.

This symphony requires a very large orchestra, the dimensions of which have probably militated against frequent performance of the work. It is constructed as follows: 4 flutes, 2 piccolos, 3 oboes, cor anglais, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, 4 bassoons, contra-bassoon, 6 horns, 6 trumpets, 4 trombones, tuba, organ, 2 harps, the usual strings, and a whole gallery of percussion instruments, including the "Ruthe" or whip, which Richard Strauss has used with good effect in the early part of his *Elektra*.

The *Second Symphony* of Mahler is of gigantic proportions and a detailed description of it would fill many pages. It runs into five movements, the general feeling being that of immense force and vigour mixed with tenderness (perhaps all too fleeting); the themes are big almost to clumsiness, the wealth of idea profuse. It is, in fact, a true successor to the symphonies of Beethoven and of Brahms, in stateliness and occasional stridence. Mahler is not afraid of insisting upon a theme, however stark and severe, though it may take a dozen pages of score to come to its own; and as regards material and idea there is enough in one movement of this work to form a complete symphony by latter-day composers.

Perhaps the most astonishing feature is the exhibition of the diversity of Mahler's musical mind. Each movement is separate and distinct from the other. Each bears its own individual stamp, and so varied are the facets of the artist's outlook that the symphony gives one perhaps the impression of being the work of several composers. This, however, does not imply looseness of structure, weakness, or incoherence, for the whole is bound together by that distinct feeling of dominating force and power of will so characteristic of Mahler's music in general.

Frankly speaking, the work is far from being perfect in technique. In these days of economy of means as regards scoring Mahler's almost brutal energy of orchestration strikes one unfavourably. He employs the whole orchestra unceasingly and does not seem satisfied unless the complete machinery is in motion. This overloading not only becomes monotonous and wearisome, but tends to spoil some of the most lovely passages, and when Mahler occasionally gives his melody free and untrammelled play, it is, one feels, a trifle petulantly, as though he longed to set the wheels of the entire orchestra going again. But though this is perhaps the most serious blemish in Mahler's work, it is his personal outlook, his musical idiom, he himself.

The eleven Polydor records of the symphony (Nos. 69681 to 69691) which have been strongly recommended by the Editor (October, page 220), are played by the orchestra of the Berlin State Opera House and conducted by Oskar Fried. The performance is of great beauty and obviously realises the intentions of the composer to a marked degree. The flute and harp come out very clearly and if there is a little thickness and muzziness in the 'cellos and basses it is probably the fault of the composer and not of the executants. As an instance of perfect recording I would draw attention to ten bars before No. 23 in the score and for some bars onwards, where the strings, alone or accompanied by harps and horns, play gorgeous melody, left to their own devices.

The first movement opens with an upward rushing semiquaver figure in the 'cellos and double-basses, followed by a group of four triplets, reminiscent of the beginning of the *Third String Quartet* by Brahms. What may stand for the second subject is a soaring scale of melody given to the violins, used again in the last movement of the work. The general feeling of the music throughout the whole of the first movement is that depicting an unequal struggle between man and some more powerful hidden force, a striving against fate, which is the key-note of so many of the creations of Beethoven. The whole section is grim, almost dour in character, with a few moments of relief and resignation, such as the lovely passage at No. 23 (full score, Universal Edition) which would seem to show that the composer had, for a while, abandoned the hopeless combat.

The chief fault of the first movement, as indeed of the whole work lies in the over-elaborate scoring. As in Strauss' *Domestic Symphony*,

handfuls of notes could be plucked and discarded from the score, not with detriment, but with advantage to the music. Even the extremely simple themes are weighed down and overloaded with extraneous thick accompaniment. By this process the ear soon wearies, and what is worse, when a powerful climax is intended, the composer has no remaining forces at his command, in spite of the huge orchestra he has at hand.

The second movement comes as a surprise and relief after the strenuous impotence of the first. It commences with a charming simple theme of *Ländler*-like quality and Schubertian grace, marred, later on, unfortunately, by the complicated orchestration already referred to, which would seem to be Mahler's besetting sin. The movement is short and ends with the same child-like simplicity, leaving one to marvel at the breadth of a musical mind which can encompass so diverse a range of expression.

With the third section we enter into another entirely different world, the realm of Liszt and Berlioz, in diabolical mood. Long running *legato* scale passages are heard alternately on the strings and wood-wind with *pizzicato* accompaniment in the bass, and occasionally interrupted by ejaculations from the brass instruments. The effect thus produced is devilish and Mephistophelian in character, but, through it all, there is more than one hint of the lighter side, of salon music and the waltz.

There is no break between the third and fourth movements of the symphony. The latter is the shortest in the whole work and consists of a beautiful contralto solo. The poem is taken from the old German collection, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, and is entitled "Urlicht," or "Source of Light."

A rough translation of the poem is as follows:—

Man is in great sorrow and deep distress!  
I fain would be in Heaven!  
I wandered forth upon a broad and beauteous path,  
And met an angel who would have turned me back;  
But I cried: "I come from God and will to Him again,  
For He will give me light,  
And guide me to the realms of everlasting life!"

This lovely aria is somewhat akin in feeling to the *Alto Rhapsody* by Brahms, and though very short, deserves to be taken from the symphony and heard frequently in the concert-room.

From this moment of quiet and thoughtful ecstasy the listener is suddenly torn away and hurled, without pause, into the opening fury of the fifth and last movement, marked in the score *Wild herausfahrend*.

"Perfect Mahlerites" may probably deem it rank heresy to suggest that the first half of this last movement had better never been written. To others the section 1 to 31 in the full score, with its coarse orchestration and blatant march will appear too full of the worse Mahlerisms for their fancy. For undoubtedly the finest part of the whole work begins at the end. It is in the form of a chorale, the words of which speak of death, resurrection, and early preparation for a future life. A new facet of Mahler's genius is here made apparent—namely, the power to handle choral construction. The two solo voices (soprano and contralto) blend admirably with the choral mass, and by the composer's special instruction are never allowed to dominate it (*im Geringsten hervorzutreten*), thus giving the effect of unanimous prayer and undivided faith.

Some strange directions for conductor and performers are dotted about the full score. We read, for instance, at the end of the first movement: "An interval of at least five minutes must be made here." Later: "The bell of the trumpet to be raised high in the air" (though this, through Richard Strauss, has now become quite usual). In the fourth movement the bassoons, horns and trumpets are to be removed to the back of the orchestra, to return to their original places later on. Horns 7 to 10 then retire into the background and so weiter!

Towards the end of the work trumpets in F, those in C, triangle, and other percussion instruments are banished to a position almost out of the building, to return, later, to their allotted places in the orchestra as quietly as possible, for fear of disturbing the beginning of the final chorus!! Odd as these directions may sound, there can be no doubt whatever that, nevertheless, the work, taken as a whole, with all its faults, remains a colossal product of a master mind.

G. R. H.





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# Analytical Notes and First Reviews

## TCHAIKOVSKY'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

**H.M.V.**—D.1037, 1038, 1039, 1040, 1041 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—**Royal Albert Hall Orchestra** conducted by Sir Landon Ronald: **Symphony No. 4** (Tchaikovsky). Ref. Eulenburg min. score. (Also in Philharmonia).

Breaks: 1037, page 25, letter E; page 54, letter L. 1038, beginning of page 87; end of movement. 1039, page 134, bar 2. 1040, page 160, bar 10. 1041, page 224, letter E.

The story of the *Fourth Symphony* is in Rosa Newmarch's book on Tchaikovsky. It was dedicated to his benefactress Madame von Meck. "I believe you would find in it an echo of your most intimate thoughts and emotions" he wrote; but he never really knew her. Tchaikovsky, ever the egotist, thought of others in terms of his own feelings and broodings. The power of Fate is the symphony's burden—a heavy one. I do not propose to follow his fairly detailed analysis of the work. The Fate theme (horns and bassoons) opens, and comes in several times here and there; "inescapable and invincible," he said of Fate. Poor Tchaikovsky! Remember the very significant fact that the *Fourth Symphony* was written immediately after a severe nervous illness. (It was by the kindness of Madame von Meck that he went abroad after it, to recuperate.) Of the second theme (flutes and oboes, page 33) he wrote "A bright and serene presence leads me on." Would that he had oftener been guided so! To some criticism of the work he once replied that there was scarcely anything in it that he had not truly felt, and which was not "an echo of his most intimate spiritual life." Good; but some of us wish that he could have been persuaded to take himself less seriously and portentously—to keep from dramatising his fits of the dysmias so persistently. Artistically we delight in his fine competence. He knew his job inside out as an orchestrator, and he was a competent architect of big movements—when he liked to use his full skill.

Some of his moods make us purr with contentment, and in others he makes our flesh—or other folks'—creep gorgeously. Not that he tried to: he was far too intent on the crepitations of his own flesh (spirit, rather); but who knows, if he had had a hearty family around him, as Bach had, whether it wouldn't have done him good? He was by far the worst hypochondriac we ever had in music. Half the time his outbursts are pure Russian peasant-hysteria translated into terms of music. Listen to this music, to the *Pathetic*, and to all Tchaikovsky's work with a judicial ear and a heart ready to be touched, but armed against maudlin fears expressed (frequently) in extremely clever music. I except, of course, his many perfectly charming movements, in which all music lovers revel.

**First Movement.**—The full brass is uncommonly good—really big and striking. The horns "blob" a tiny bit at the start. The opening tune is given out broadly, as indeed are all the themes. The freedom and sway in the playing please me much. But the new recording doesn't tend to make clear the individuality of the orchestra's members; compare wood and brass in the "replies" on pages 20 and 21, for instance; they sound too much alike; and when the upper wood wind plays in octaves, we don't seem to be able to hear the individual instruments as we used to do. The development is pretty mechanical on the second side—and elsewhere. We have far too much cheap and easy sequential work. The horn blobs on page 45. The drums come out at page 87 quite well. The sonority at the end of the first side is about the best we have had from the "new process" records, I believe; but the full strings are not a happy reproduction of orchestral strings, and that reed-organ quality soon becomes very tiresome. The sound is still boxed up, as if in some enormously resonant bathroom. A better example of the new recording's volumetric powers could not be; but, Lord, what jog-trot devilment the music is!

**Second Movement.**—Not very well treated—rather unresilient when the soloists have the opening tune. The second (at page 128) has crude Russian repetition. How could an artistic musician be content to repeat a tag so? The repose we want after the hurly-burly of the first movement (and before the worse one coming) is lacking.

The **Third Movement** is pure craftsmanship, in Tchaikovsky's best manner. The pizzicato comes off well, though I should like

still more meat in the tone. The meat ought to be stringy, but this is slabby—overdone. Let us be thankful, though, for the amount of tone we get. This is really quite surprising.

Listen to the start of the *Last Movement*. It hits off the grandiose, noisy side of Tchaikovsky's nature excellently. Is it much better than a gorgeous row, though? Where is the substance in it, apart from his dragging in his pet theme, which would be happier playing by itself in another backyard? Emotion and spiritual movement are what we want, and these gusty rages of Tchaikovsky are but the east wind of doctrine. Listen critically to this movement and then say if it really chimes with any mood that you would have any satisfaction in owning to. It is as nearly a bankruptcy of architectural and emotional craftsmanship as ever a clever man attained to.

I have really little to say about the playing, because I don't honestly feel that the new process of recording allows us to tell sufficiently well what is being done. The distortion seems to me altogether too great to allow us to hear what is being done. All that has been said in the last few months shows that, I think. My general impression is that this symphony (with the exceptions noted above) has been most adequately done. The din in the last movement sounds to me just the sort of din Tchaikovsky would be likely to want; and as din is the be-all and end-all of that movement, I applaud the performance, as I would that of Charles Peace—as a piece of craftsmanship, without necessarily subscribing to the morals of the one or sympathising with the mentality of the other.

K. K.

## CHAMBER MUSIC

### SCHUMANN'S QUINTET, Op. 44

**H.M.V.**—D.B.780 and 781 (12in., 8s. 6d. each).—**Ossip Gabrilowitsch and the Flonzaley Quartet**: **Piano Quintet in E flat, Op. 44** (Schumann). Ref. Eulenburg score (G. and T.). Also in Philharmonia.

Schumann's output went pretty clearly in stages—first piano music, then songs (some of the most deeply felt followed his marriage in 1840), then symphonies, and "a new department," as he called it—chamber music. The three quartets (Op. 41), the quintet and the Op. 47 quartet came in quick succession.

We thought the Demon Cuts was dead; he isn't. The problem now is whether we shall damn this cut version of Schumann, or, remembering the simplicity and clarity of the work, be thankful that its main outlines are here, and sit silent, taking two records full of the virile, poetic music, and deeming that as much as we can pay for (at D.B. prices). Myself, I shall have my curse first, and then mitigate it a trifle, on condition that the records, and all references to them in any form whatsoever, shall fully indicate that the work is cut, and where it is cut. My copies have not the printed labels, so I don't yet know what is to be done; but I hope we shall all kindly but extremely firmly insist that not only bulletins and advertisements, but the labels shall always indicate when a work is cut. We must not have any more misunderstandings. I object to cuts on principle, but there are works in which I think all but the most desperate purists would be quite willing to take the part—would sometimes almost prefer it; some of Schubert, for example (I duck to avoid the brick from the ardent whole-Schubert-hogger).

The first movement has more than one cut. There is a slice taken from page 5, line 2, to page 6, end of line 1; then from the top of 10 to the end of the top line of 12; lastly, from page 15, line 2 to page 16, end of top line. Repetitions are not played anywhere, except that of the Scherzo's first 16 bars.

In the slow movement, one of the finest of elegies, there is a big cut from the bottom of page 19 to the *Agitato* on page 23. Then from the third bar on the bottom of page 24 they go to the top of page 26, and so to the end, with four bars in the middle line of page 29 deleted. This, I am quite clear, is too big a cut. Schumann's proportions are spoiled.



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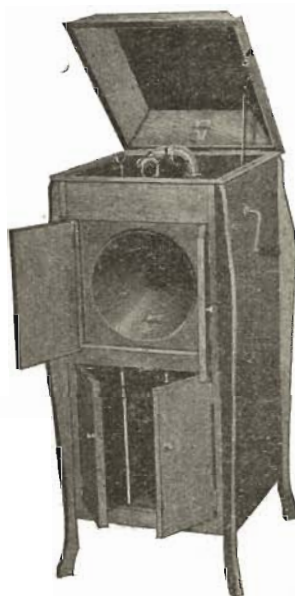
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Extract from *THE NATSOPA JOURNAL*, August, 1925.

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The Scherzo is in full. Excellent. Niecks, in his book on Schumann, recently issued (Dent), tells us that Mendelssohn criticised the original second trio in this movement as not being lively enough, so Schumann wrote another; that certainly is.

Last movement: Cuts from bottom line of page 45, bar 4, to middle line of page 46, bar 5; from middle of last bar, top line, page 49, to top of page 51; from middle of last bar, top line, page 52, to middle of bar 2, top line, page 53; from middle of bar 4, this page, to middle of bar 3, top line, page 55; and from bar 5, top line, page 59, to bar 7, bottom line, same page.

This does not greatly trouble us. The last movement is a splendid, exhilarating thing, but it does not seem to me to lose much by the cut, though I would have liked all of the imitative *coda*.

The strings don't sound very stringy, though they are strong; the piano is good and balances well. I should have liked better *pp* tone. The work needs a little more "playing with", I feel; but its sturdiness shows up well, and there is a brisk clarity about the performance that I like.

Those cuts, on the whole, are not so dreadful as I thought they might be, but we shall set our faces against them, on principle, I hope.

K. K.

**CHERNIAVSKY TRIO.**—*Moment Musicale* (Schubert) and *Trio in D minor (Scherzo)* (Mendelssohn). Columbia 3738 (10in., 3s.).

*Cherniavsky Trio.*—'Cello rather choppy, save where it has singing bit of tune. The whole effect is somewhat thin and not too well coloured.

**LONDON STRING QUARTET.**—*Quartet—Satz in C Minor* (Schubert). Columbia L.1679 (12in., 6s. 6d.). G. and T., Phil.

*London String Quartet.*—So many new quartets are now heard that we are in danger of forgetting old friends. The London String Quartet's purity of tone and elevation of style are always refreshing. This posthumous movement of Schubert is a fragrant thing. I am glad they give it time to sing. I think it represents their playing at its best. Others may give us greater sonority or livelier emotion, but the London String Quartet has peculiar virtues for respect and admiration. The break comes at the top of page 26 (Eulenburg).

## ORCHESTRAL

### H.M.V.

C.1225 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Meredith-Kay and his Orchestra *Scheithallion Reel (Eightsome)*.

B.2166 (10in., 3s.).—Scotch Country Dance Orchestra: *Triumph and The Haymakers*.

### COLUMBIA.

9059 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—B.B.C. Wireless Symphony Orchestra: *The Empire March* (Elgar) and *Krakowiak* (Moszkowski).

L.1653 and 1654 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter: *Siegfried Idyll* (Wagner).

L.1678 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra conducted by Frank Bridge: *A Christmas Dance (Sir Roger de Coverley)* and *Poem No. 2 ("Richard Jefferies")* (F. Bridge).

L.1680, 1681, and 1682 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—Albert Sammons and *Symphony Orchestra* conducted by Harty: *Violin Concerto in G minor* (Max Bruch).

3795 (10in., 3s.).—Court Symphony Orchestra: *Cavalleria Rusticana Overture* (Mascagni).

### PARLOPHONE.

E.10375 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *Mignon Overture* (Thomas).

E.10377 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *The Queen of Sheba, Processional March* (Goldmark).

E.10378 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80* (Brahms).

E.10383, 10384, and 10385 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Riele Queling with Orchestral Accompaniment: *Violin Concerto No. 4 in D* (Mozart).

### VOCALION.

A.0247 and 0248 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—Aeolian Orchestra conducted by Dr. Vaughan Williams: *Old King Cole Ballet Suite* (Vaughan Williams).

### ACO.

G.15830 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Grosvenor Orchestra: *Norwegian Dance No. 3* (Grieg) and *Natoma, the Dagger Dance* (Herbert).

G.15805 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Grosvenor Orchestra: *Wedgwood Blue Intermezzo* (Ketelbey) and *Serenade* (Titl).

G.15804 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Marlborough Orchestra: *Minuet and Serenade from Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo) and *Overture, Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart).

### DUOPHONE.

A.1019 (12in., 4s.).—Mackenzie Rogan's Symphony Orchestra: *Petite Suite de Concert—La Caprice de Nannette, Demande et Réponse, Un Sonnet d'Amour, and La Tarantelle Fretillante* (Coleridge-Taylor).

A.1020 (12in., 4s.).—Mackenzie Rogan's Symphony Orchestra: *Intermezzo Mignonne* (C. Reyners) and *Benedictus* (A. C. Mackenzie).

### POLYDOR.

65951 (12in., 5s. 9d.).—Philharmonic Orchestra (German), conducted by Otto Marienhagen: *Introduction to Lohengrin* (Wagner).

65891 (12in., 5s. 9d.).—Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Leo Blech: *Funeral March of a Marionette* (Gounod) and *Prelude from Holberg Suite* (Grieg).

*H.M.V.*—Meredith-Kay. I defy anyone to sit entirely still while this is going on. It has a great lilt. There is rather a lot of it, and the din is considerable, but what a swing of the kilt is in it! The other dances are equally invigorating.

*Columbia.*—The Elgar march was written for the Wembley celebrations last year, I believe. It is a good bold affair, but not the best Elgar—rather a pale reflection of the *Pomp and Circumstance* marches. The jaunty Polish dance reminds one of many others, but that is Moszkowski's way. It is a cheery specimen, for light recreation. The band's tone is rather seaside-y: good enough, but not specially fine. No subtlety is called for, of course, in either piece.

How many more *Siegfried Idylls* are to come? This is restrained, and calm. The beauty exhales slowly, and it is somehow impersonal. On the whole, I doubt if I shall like it. Still more tender, intimate expression seems to be wanted for this love-gift. On page 15 (Eulenburg) at the entry of the little five-notes-descending song Walter is very deliberate, as also elsewhere. Not quite my ideal performance, though the playing is very clear, and sufficiently rich.

The Bridge *Sir Roger* would have astonished the good knight (even if he had anything to do with the dance). There is something more than English jollity here—a dash of Gallic spirit, surely (one recalls, without trying to, Dukas's *Apprenti Sorcier*). The revels are gay enough, any way. Is the Jefferies celebrated in the other piece the nature-lover (1848-87) who delighted in the open air and wrote so understandingly of wild things? I take it these moods, now exuberant and now more restful, with their intimations of natural sounds and the general cast of fresh-air enjoyment, were suggested by reading Jefferies. There is a Borrowian spirit here, too, I feel. Two good varied samples of the vigorous side of Bridge.

Bruch (1838-1920) was an able craftsman, though rarely an inspired one. This violin concerto (dedicated to Joachim) contains much that will please lovers of mildly sentimental and agreeably bustling music. The slow movement, while not in the least fresh, really sounds sincere and unaffected. He knew how to write for the fiddle, and how to let it show off. Sammons plays as he always does—as truly and keenly as if the music were really great stuff. There speaks the fine artist, but we wish he had chosen better stuff on which to spend three records. There is really nothing much to say about the music. The orchestra achieves as good a balance as I imagine could well be got, so the work receives every chance. The *Cavalleria Overture* is prettily played.

*Parlophone.*—Some delicately shaded work in *Mignon*, with agreeable tit-bits of wood-wind and harp solos. Then comes *Knowest thou the land?* and, on the other side, the *Polonaise* from Act 2, *I am Titania*. The full wind is a little cold-id-the-dose-y. Everything is admirably crisp.

How finely Gluck expressed in music the dignity and elevation of mind in the Greek subjects on which he built his operas! Wagner, who did so much to make Gluck known again in Germany, revised the score of *Iphigenia* and added a new *coda*. The themes heard he calls respectively those of Appeal (introduction), of Power (the first in the *allegro* portion), of Maidenly Tenderness (violins and flutes in a dainty lilting melody that symbolises the heroine), and



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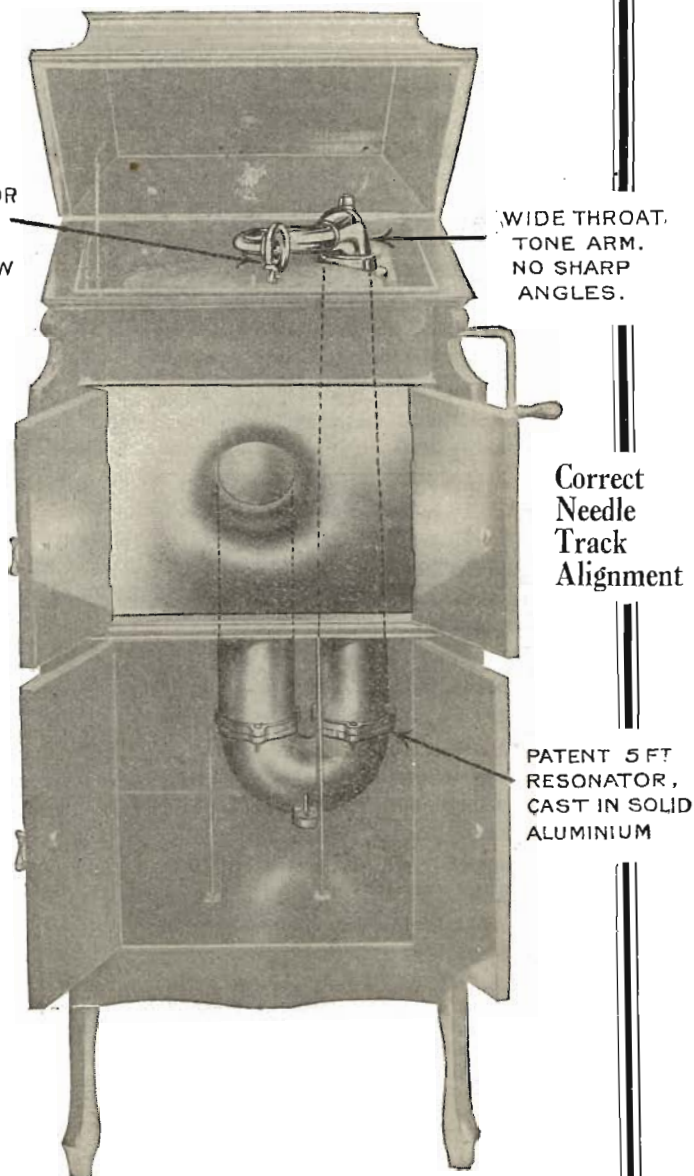
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of Pity (two-note reiterations by violins, with oboe below in a sighing figure). At the end the Power theme quietly but insistently reappears below that of Appeal. I like this clearly outlined and full-bodied performance.

The *Queen of Sheba March* is not so rich in tone. It is an ordinarily decent piece of work, calling for no remark.

The Brahms has been annotated before (in the June issue, page 35). The orchestration is extremely well reproduced, save that the full yet soft parts are just a trifle underdone, so to speak. In clarity its louder moments are as good as anything Parlophone has lately given us. The middle of side two has not quite so much of body in it as one would like. By and large, the record is not so good as Columbia's, but it is distinctly good value for about two-thirds the other's price.

It is exceedingly pleasant to get two of Mozart's violin concertos in two months. A general word about them appeared on page 290 last month. This is every bit as delightful as the other. The player needs a peculiar fineness of perception that shall enable him to present the works stylishly according to the manner of their conception, with all daintiness and grace, without too much portamento (the bane of young Mozart singers)—in a word, to make the music scintillate in the quick movements and soothe us (if no more) in the slow ones. The fiddler here is uncommonly good, very nearly as good as was Miss d'Aranyi last month; and that is high praise. The capricious changes of time in the last movement are capitally treated. The orchestra is well on the mark all the time and supports lightly, while leaving the soloist a clear field for the display, not of virtuosity, but of the music's felicities.

*Vocalion*.—There is more than a trace of *Hugh the Drover* in this suite of music from that written for an open-air performance, I believe. The composer is not too happy in bustling music. The modal idiom becomes rather dull after a while. Mannerism seems to be creeping over him. The quieter bits here are best. I have at the time of writing no clue to the portions of the ballet that the various episodes accompany. The Bulletin, I hear, gives a few details of the action going on. I feel, however, that gaiety is not the doctor's strong point. Music heard away from a ballet is not always a success. It is perhaps scarcely a fair test to put it before us thus, and let it stand or fall by its effect on the ear, when the eye cannot be engaged too. There are felicitous things here—the bit of musing by a solo instrument at the end of side two, for instance, and the starting tune of side three. But I believe it would do Vaughan Williams good, big man as he is (and much as we esteem him) to get away from modalism a little more. No great composer stuck so to an idiom.

*Aco*.—The Grieg is pretty sedate—too many even accents. It wants more spring in it, and better stress-shading. The middle section is better. The other piece is "Red Indian" music—good enough, of its twopence-coloured kind. The playing is sound—a little harsh in a forte, but quite well blended. The other little things have no distinction, good or bad, as music. Again the playing is decent, and the surface causes little noise. The *Pagliacci Minuet* is really a descendant of the *Sarabande*—quite a good example, with its stressed second beat. There is some nice solo tone on this side. *Figaro* is not so well balanced tonally, though there is happy life in the performance. This record is good value.

*Duophone*.—Hearty rather than subtle in any way are these interpretations. The tone is clear and bright and is given out freely, with little distortion of any kind. The Reyners piece is of the conventionally skittish kind that used to delight the patrons of the Empire, after Delibes had shown the way. All this music is very obvious, and does not really test an orchestra at all adequately. There is a fair amount of surface noise. Judged by the older standards, the recording is distinctly praiseworthy.

*Polydor*.—The vision of the Holy Grail gradually becoming clear and fading away was in Wagner's mind when he wrote the *Lohengrin Prelude*. That ethereal violin work is very carefully done here. I could like a still finer *pp*. The surface noise is not inconsiderable. This, though a good record, does not quite, to my mind, come up to the H.M.V. performance of the *Prelude* in delicacy. The Gounod march (one of the best things he ever did) has the right solemn dryness; the pompous measure of the mannikins is trod with an air. One can see them jogging along with the whole world of toy woe in their steps, and a cast of gloom indelibly painted on their wooden countenances. A capitally sealed-down performance. Grieg's rather fussy *Prelude* comes off fairly well, though the lower string work is not too clear. The orchestration is partly at fault, but the players should have been more numerous or more powerful.

K. K.

## INSTRUMENTAL

### PIANOFORTE.

**YORK BOWEN**.—Ballade in A flat, Op. 47 (Chopin). Vocalion X.9666 (10in., 3s.).

**PACHMANN**.—Nocturne in D flat, Op. 27, No. 2, Valse in C sharp, and Etude in F minor (Chopin). H.M.V., D.B.860 (12in., 8s. 6d.).

**MAURICE COLE**.—Traumeswirren, Op. 12, No. 7 (Schumann) and Scherzo in E minor (Mendelssohn). Aco. G.15801 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

**UNA BOURNE**.—Le Jet d'Eau (Sydney Smith) and Rustle of Spring (Sinding). H.M.V., B.2141 (10in., 3s.).

### VIOLIN.

**CARL FLESCHE**.—Berceuse (Fauré) and Aria (Lotti). Polydor 65983 (12in., 5s. 9d.).

**VASA PRIHODA**.—Zigeunerweisen (Sarasate). Polydor 65993 (12in., 5s. 9d.).

**EILEEN ANDJELKOVITCH**.—Minuet in D (Mozart-Burmester) and Serenata, Op. 15, No. 1 (Moszkowski). Aco. G.15802 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

**MARJORIE HAYWARD**.—Serenade (Drdla) and Valse Triste (Cyril Scott). H.M.V., B.2140 (10in., 3s.).

**JELLY D'ARANYI**.—Passepied (Destouches-Dandelot) and Largo and Allegro giocoso (Galuppi-Craxton). Vocalion, K.05203. (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**PEGGY COCHRANE**.—La Precieuse (Couperin-Kreisler) and Vision, Op. 28 (Drdla). Aco. G.15826 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

### 'CELLO.

**CASALS**.—Après un Rêve (Fauré) and Chanson Villageoise, Op. 62, No. 2 (D. Popper). H.M.V., D.A.731 (10in., 6s.).

**MARIE DARE**.—Largo (Handel) and Harlequinade (Squire). Aco. G.15827 (10in., 3s.).

**W. H. SQUIRE**.—Der Schmetterling (Harty) and Canto popolare (Elgar). Columbia D.1523 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

### MISCELLANEOUS.

Vereinigung der Kapelle der Staatsoper, Berlin: Minuet from Divertimento No. 17 (Mozart) and Minuet from Octet in F, Op. 166 (Schubert). Polydor, 62347 (10in., 4s.).

*York Bowen*.—This player is always full of life, sharp set, and natty. A wee bit jerky, perhaps, for this piece. His tone is fairly round, without being very rich. There is a tang in its more highly percussive moments. The interpretation is notably well controlled and musicianly. The thirty-fifth bar from the end has a wrong note which sounds extremely odd.

*Pachmann*.—Is it ungrateful to complain that the new piano recording knocks our notions of familiar players' tone endways? Pachmann, thou art translated!—and not to advantage, I feel. The piano's scale is not evenly reproduced—that is the chief complaint. We get greatly increased sonority, certainly, and a greater measure of truth in some sounds, but the clangs and inequalities please me little. Others may be glad to overlook them for the sake of the benefits, which are notable. The player's style and spirit come through extremely well—and, praises be, he does not utter a word the whole time. What a fine builder he is! A piece bur geons and blossoms under his hands into sheer loveliness of tonal and architectural beauty.

*Maurice Cole*.—The Mendelssohn is also known, in some prints, as a "Capriccio." Mr. Cole is hard and bright, but not to the music's detriment, save that his repeated loud notes sometimes sound metallic. Tinkley the music is, and tinkley must sound if foatly and fittingly played. The Schumann *Dream Vision* is touched off dapperly. The balanced *rubato* is especially good. There is plenty of room for more cheap Schumanns.

*Una Bourne*.—Dear old *Jet d'Eau*, art plashing yet? Mighty pretty for the after-dinner hour when Papa loves to lie back and hear from one daughter "mild, pretty, senseless songs," as Massfeld calls them, and from the other, discourse of *Jets d'Eau*, and other harmless cordials. Sinding is a bit hardly rustled in a stiffish breeze. Miss Bourne keeps on the trifling side. She would be welcomed in something meatier.



**Carl Flesch.**—The right style, resilient and free-rhythmed, for the Fauré sugar-plum. The sonority is considerable. The *rubato* fits well in the Lotti (who is presumably the eighteenth century organist of St. Mark's, Venice). His manner of writing—a sort of compound of "classical" and semi-florid styles—is interestingly exemplified by this piece. There is rather a lot of scratch from these records.

**Vasa Prihoda.**—This is certainly the way in which to show off the Sarasate. Whether the gipsies get a fair look-in no one cares; the fiddling's the thing, and the player has ample resources for exciting our admiration. This is about the best performance of the piece I have heard, I think. The piano supports well.

**Eileen Andjelkovich.**—Her *rubato* in the Moszkovski is rather heavily arch, I feel. The tone is rich and quite satisfying in purity. The Mozart minuet is that which Robert Pollak did last month (Homochord). I like it better from this player.

**Marjorie Hayward.**—Our English fiddlers hold their own with any. Big tone, a trifle piercing, perhaps. There is abounding life here. The piano tone is pretty big, too. The value is not really *triste*—only pretending—and not too successfully. Happiness will keep creeping in.

**Jelly d'Aranyi.**—This player is full of vitality always, clear, pure, and sonorous. The *Passepied*, that foreran the *Minuet*, was a lively affair, of which this is a good example. This *Destouches* is presumably the early one—A.C. (1672–1749). Galuppi might not have been remembered had not Browning made one of his pieces a text for a not very apt dissertation. There is not much in his *Largo* or in the following piece. I feel that Miss d'Aranyi takes him rather too seriously and strenuously.

**Peggy Cochrane.**—A wee bit sophisticated for Couperin's naïve poetic suggestion, maybe, but thoroughly acceptable playing—sound and sensible—in both pieces. A fair amount of piano.

**Casals.**—The finest art is lavished on the slightest of music. Those who buy records for the playing alone will be well pleased, and rightly, with these strains, respectively mildly sentimental and sophisticatedly sprightly. But the best of the Beethoven cello sonatas are surely due from Casals.

**Marie Dare.**—The *Largo* is scarcely eloquent, and nothing less than eloquence will do. The *vibrato* is somewhat stiff and the piano does not sustain. For slow Handel your background *must* be rich and singing. Far too many players give us what I call "peas on a shovel" pianism there. Of course, it may be largely the reproduction's fault, in this instance. The speed seems to me rather too slow, even for a *largo*. The Squire piece, of the least possible consequence, is well played.

**W. H. Squire.**—The flutterer is well caught. The Elgar tune, as usual, with this player, somewhat sentimentalised. It sings well. The piano is a bit dry.

**Vereinigung.**—The same old Mozart *Minuet*—twice this month! This party treats it very soberly—stodgily almost. Too many bars are accented alike. It is nicely balanced playing. The Schubert is a contrast—the homely strain over against the courtly. Nothing very striking here in music or playing. Both are a bit dull. K. K.

## OPERATIC

**MARIA SCHREKA** (soprano).—Weh' mir, ich fühls and Man nennt mich Mimi from *Bohème* (Puccini). Polydor 65809, 12in., 5s. 9d.

**SIGRID ONEGIN** (contralto).—Ach, ich habe sie verloren from *Orpheus und Eurydike* (Gluck) and O schöne Jugendtage from *Evangelimann* (Kienzl). Polydor 72720, 12in., 6s. 9d.

**DELIA REINHARDT** (soprano).—Einsam in trüben Tagen from *Lohengrin* (Wagner) and Sie sass mit Leide from *Otello* (Verdi). Polydor 72775, 12in., 6s. 9d.

**FRIEDA HEMPEL** (soprano).—Voi che sapete from *Figaro* and Hark! the Vesper Hymn is stealing (arr. J. Stevanson). H.M.V., D.A.675, 10in., 6s.

**MARIA IVOGÜN** (soprano).—Märtern aller Artern from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Mozart) and Geschichten aus dem Wiener Wald (Johann Strauss). Polydor 85303, 12in., 6s. 9d.

**G. MARIO SAMMARCO** (baritone).—Toreador Song from *Carmen* (Bizet) and Cavatina di Figaro from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Rossini). Actuelle 15205, 12in., 6s.

**EVELYN SCOTNEY** (soprano).—Deh, non varcar quell'onda and To sorrow now my days are fated from *The Magic Flute* (Mozart). H.M.V., D.1035, 12in., 6s. 6d.

**MIRIAM LICETTE** (soprano).—Ave Maria and Salce (The Willow Song) from *Otello* (Verdi). Col. L.1683, 12in., 6s. 6d.

**Th. I. CHALIAPINE** (bass).—Nor sleep nor rest and How goes it, Prince? from *Prince Igor* (Borodin). H.M.V., D.B.799, 12in., 8s. 6d.

**HAROLD WILLIAMS** (baritone).—Gazing around from Act II, *Tannhäuser* (Wagner) and Confutatis Maledictis from *Requiem* (Verdi). Columbia 9061, 12in., 4s. 6d.

**CECIL SHERWOOD** (tenor).—'Tis the day (Mattinata) (Tosti) and Recondita armonia from *Tosca* (Verdi). Zonophone G.O.66, 10in., 3s. 6d.

**G. LENGHI-CELLINI** (tenor).—O Lola (Siciliana) and Brindisi (Drinking Song) from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni). Parlophone E.10386, 12in., 4s. 6d.

**LUELLA MELIUS** (soprano).—Ah! lo so (Pamina's Aria) and Gli angui d'inferno (Der Hölle Rache—from *Magic Flute*). H.M.V., D.A.723, 10in., 6s. 6d.

**MICHAEL BOHNEN** (baritone).—Invocation from *Robert le Diable* (Meyerbeer) and Sei vendicata assai from *Dinorah* (Meyerbeer). Brunswick 15097, 4s. 6d.

**TUDOR DAVIES** (tenor).—Oh, voice of magic melody and Oh, loveliness beyond compare from *The Magic Flute* (Mozart). H.M.V., E.401, 10in., 6s. 6d.

**ELISABETH SCHUMANN** (soprano).—Neue freuden, neue Schmerzen and Ihr, die ihr Triebe from *Le Nozze* (Mozart). Polydor 65654, 5s. 9d.

**Maria Schreka.**—The name of this German soprano is not unfamiliar to me, although she has never yet appeared in this country. She has a sympathetic voice, but, like so many of her countrywomen, she is prone to over-sentimentalise modern operatic airs generally and Puccini in particular. In *Un bel dì*, whereof we have here the German version, she represents a vastly sorrowful Butterfly instead of the still hopeful creature who is depicting to Suzuki the joyful scene of Pinkerton's anticipated return. Her tears also induce much slurring and scooping, which is a pity, because her tone is very pleasant, and the orchestral accompaniment is unusually good. The singer's subdued method sounds less out of place in Mimi's "autobiography" and it pleases accordingly.

**Sigrid Oegin.**—New features are not precisely to be looked for in fresh records of well-known pieces, but rather beauty of voice and style and an intelligent adherence to traditional rendering. These things will be found in adequate measure in Sigrid Oegin's quiet delivery of the great air from Gluck's *Orpheus*—grief that is tenderly peaceful but never for a moment passionate, as Giulia Ravogli used to make it for us; anguish well under control, but minus the wonderful ending that Pauline Viardot-Garcia introduced. The contralto song from Kienzl's tedious opera, *Der Evangelimann*, begins on some lovely low notes, but they do not last long, worse luck; for they are smoothly and deftly managed, with good breathing. This opera in 1897 was all the rage in Vienna, but when done at Covent Garden in the same year it sent most people to sleep, myself included. Both excerpts, by the way, are very clear and without scratch.

**Delia Reinhardt.**—This artist was the charming Oktavian of the *Rosenkavalier* revival at Covent Garden in 1924, and also sang *Madam Butterfly*. Neither opera is illustrated on the present disc,

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and it seems to me that her capacity for displaying animal spirits is less in evidence here. True, she wakes up towards the end of each, and there is the excuse that both Desdemona and Elsa are at the moment very much "down in the dumps." But that is not sufficient reason for the prevailing atmosphere of dullness—correct and dignified, if you like, but distinctly monotonous—whilst Elsa is relating her dream and Othello's unhappy spouse is giving us a German account of poor Barbara's betrayal. "Willow" or "Salce," I suppose it is all the same thing when translated into a foreign tongue; and both records are at least worth hearing.

**Frieda Hempel.**—The *Voï che sapete* of this singer is dealt with (from another version, I fancy) elsewhere in the present number. The *Vesper Hymn* on the reverse side of the disc (bell included, gratis) will at least furnish an eloquent souvenir of one's childhood. I know I played it on the piano at the age of six, but now I can only ask, What is it doing in this *galère*?

**Maria Ivogin.**—Once more "part heard," like a case at the Law Courts! The waltz of Johann Strauss I mentioned last month in connection with *Lo! here the gentle lark*. This time it appears in conjunction with an air from Mozart's *Seraglio*; and the latter shall be duly noticed when I come to that opera in my February article.

**Mario Sammarco.**—There can be little need to describe how this popular baritone disports himself in the discussion of such hackneyed items as the *Toreador's Song* and Figaro's *Largo al factotum*. Enough that he is lively and vivacious as ever in both, and that his voice, so far as my Sonora Model will allow me to do justice to a Pathé record, sounds surprisingly fresh and strong.

**Evelyn Scotney.**—Two Mozart pieces, which I shall deal with later. The *Magic Flute* air is sung, I think, to an American translation, and not a very good one. Anyhow, the quality of the voice comes out much more true and sympathetic in the other—an Italian—record.

**Miriam Licette.**—With the *Willow Song* and the *Ave Maria* on the two sides of the same disc we get the whole of Desdemona's pathetic opening to the last act of Verdi's *Otello*, now very familiar to most gramophone lovers of opera. Pathos in its saddest expression is needed here, and I fear it is somewhat defeated by an obvious effort to hurry the tempo so as to "get it all in." However, the words are clearly enunciated and the phrasing is sufficiently neat to satisfy a fastidious ear, while the tone, if unsteady at times, comes out pure and unadulterated in the natural timbre of the artist. Altogether it must be accounted an extremely well-made record, alike in its vocal and orchestral aspects.

**Chaliapine.**—These two excerpts from Borodin's opera, *Prince Igor*, exhibit the talent of the great Russian basso in its most impressive light. The massive voice is, as usual, finely employed and with a degree of sustained dramatic power that seems to interpret every shade of emotion. We can almost follow the story without understanding a word. The tone is magnificent; the enunciation clear as a bell; better recording could hardly be wished for. In the second section—the quicker movement—with its characteristic bold rhythm, the artist simply revels in his task and brings in a diabolical laugh with wonderful effect. The accompaniment is ably done, but at the end the singer "beats the band."

**Harold Williams.**—One an admirable rendering of the bass air, *Confutatis maledictis*, from Verdi's *Requiem*, particularly good for its devotional feeling and expressive, steady tone in the lovely passage, "Oro supplex et acclinis." The other less interesting on the whole, but nevertheless a quite acceptable performance of Wolfgram's so-called fantasy from *Tannhäuser*.

**Cecil Sherwood.**—The name of this tenor is new to me. He has a bright, telling voice and uses it in a manner that tells of modern Italian training. There is plenty of sonority in the air from *Tosca*, where accepted models are carefully followed. Tosti's ballad on the reverse side is tastefully sung to a piano accompaniment.

**G. Lenghi-Cellini.**—In these two pieces from *Cavalleria Rusticana* one perceives that the climate of England agrees very well with

the Italian tenor, who has chiefly won his reputation here. His voice is free from *tremolo* and he invariably uses it to the best advantage. Both the *Siciliana* and the *Drinking Song* are given with any amount of spirit and well-directed energy, while the recording is first rate.

(The rest of these records will be noticed in my next Mozart article.) HERMAN KLEIN.

## SONGS

**LEO SLEZAK** (tenor): *Der Lindenbaum* and *Du bist die Ruh* (Schubert). Polydor B.22166 (12in., 5s. 9d.).

**HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS** (baritone): *Der Rattenfänger* and *Verschwiegene Liebe* (Hugo Wolf). Polydor B.2056 (10in., 5s.).

**MILTON STANLEY** (tenor): *The Blind Ploughman* (R. C. Clarke) and *Little Brown Cottage* (S. Dickson). Duophone B.5087 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

**JOHN THORNE AND MALE TRIO:** *Sea Shanties* (arr. R. R. Terry): (a) *Shenandoah*, (b) *Billy Boy*, (c) *Haul away, Joe*, (d) *Bound for the Rio Grande*. Aco. G.15824 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

**JOHN COATES** (tenor): *Voici Noël* (*Sweet Christmas Time*) (J. B. Weckerlin) and *The Knight of Bethlehem* (D. C. Thomson). Voc. B.3117 (10in., 4s.).

**ROY HENDERSON** (baritone): *The Land o' the Leal* (arr. Macpherson) and *O Willie brewed a peck o' maut and the deil's awa' wi' the Exciseman* (arr. J. M. Diack). Voc. X.9665 (10in., 3s.).

**WATCYN WATCYN** (bass-baritone) with the *Aeolian Orchestra*: *But who may abide* (Handel's *Messiah*) and *Thy Glorious Deeds* (Handel's *Samson*). Voc. K.05202 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**NANCY ROYLE** (soprano) and **Michael Head** (baritone): *Cries of London* (arr. Vincent Thomas). Voc. X.9662-3 (two 10in. records, 3s. each).

**JOHN THORNE** (baritone): *In Summertime on Bredon* (Graham Peel) and *By the waters of Babylon* (adapted from Psalm 137, arr. Colman Young). Aco. G.15823 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

**ETHEL HOOK** (contralto) and **ARTHUR ARGENT** (baritone): *The Keys of Heaven* (arr. Broadwood) and *ETHEL HOOK, O Lovely Night* (Landon Ronald). Voc. K.05184 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**KATHLEEN DESTOURNEL** (soprano): *Ma Curly-headed Babbie* (Clutsam) and *The Cuckoo* (Lehmann). Voc. X.9664 (10in., 3s.).

**St. SWITHIN'S CHOIR AND ORGAN:** *O come, all ye faithful* (anon.), *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing* (from Mendelssohn), *While Shepherds Watched* (Este's Psalter), *Hail, Smiling Morn* (Spofforth), *Good King Wenceslas* (trad.), and *Christians, Awake* (Wainwright). H.M.V., B.2159-61 (three 10in. records, 3s. each).

**CHOIR FROM THE BRITISH NATIONAL OPERA COMPANY:** *Blessing, Glory and Wisdom* (in two parts) (J. S. Bach). H.M.V. D.1036 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

**THE ENGLISH SINGERS:** *Now is the Month of Maying* (Morley) and *A Farmer's Son* (folk-song, arr. Vaughan Williams). H.M.V., E.405 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

**THE DE RESZKE SINGERS:**—*Sea Shanties* (arr. R. R. Terry): (a) *Wild Goose Shanty*, (b) *Blow the man down*, (c) *Johnny comes down to Hilo*, (d) *Let the bullgine run*. H.M.V., E.402 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

**MAVIS BENNETT** (soprano): *One morning very early* (with orchestra) (W. Sanderson) and *Spring Morning* (Lane Wilson). H.M.V., C.1220 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**FLORENCE AUSTRAL** (soprano) with orchestra: *Let me wander not unseen* (Handel) and *Orpheus with his Lute* (Sullivan). H.M.V., D.1042 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

**EMMY BETTENDORF** (soprano): *Who is Sylvia?*, *Heidenröslein*, and *Wohin?* (Schubert). Parlo. E.10388 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

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**JAMIESON DODDS** (baritone): *It is enough* and *Lord God of Abraham*, from *Elijah* (Mendelssohn). Parlo. E.10387 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**IRMLER MADRIGAL CHOIR**: *Hallelujah* (Hummel) and *Lascia Ch'io Pianga* (Handel). Parlo. E.10389 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**DAME CLARA BUTT** (contralto) and **KENNERLEY RUMFORD** (baritone): *Dear love of mine* from *Nadeshda* (Goring Thomas) and *O that we two were maying* (Alice M. Smith). Col. 7371 (12in., 8s. 6d.).

**CARRIE HERWIN** (contralto) with orchestra: *Slumber dear maid* (Handel's *Largo*) and *The Lost Chord* (Sullivan). Col. 9060 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**W. F. WATT** (tenor) with orchestra: *Molly Brannigan* (Stanford) and *The low-backed car* (arr. H. Hughes). Col. 3799 (10in., 3s.).

**THE OLYMPIC SINGERS**: *How sweet the name of Jesus sounds* (Reinagle) and *All people that on earth do dwell* (The Old Hundredth). Col. 3813 (10in., 3s.).

**DORA LABBETTE** (soprano) and **HUBERT EISDELL** (tenor): *Down in the Forest* (Landon Ronald) and *Seven o'clock in the morning* from *A Princess of Kensington* (E. German). Col. D.1470 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

**DORIS VANE** (soprano) with orchestra: *I love the moon* (Rubens) and *Memory's Melody* (de Rance). Col. 3798 (10in., 3s.).

**H. P. O'KILLIKELLY** (tenor) with orchestra: *The Blind Ploughman* (Clarke) and *The Minstrel Boy* (traditional). Col. 3800 (10in., 3s.).

**WINIFRED BRADY** (soprano): *Come back to Erin* (Claribel) and *The dear little Shamrock* (Jackson). Beltona 6011 (10in., 3s.).

**WINIFRED BRADY** (soprano): *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod) and *Ora pro nobis* (Picolomini). Beltona 6012 (10in., 3s.).

**HERBERT THORPE** (tenor): *Maire my girl* (Aitken) and *If I might come to you* (W. H. Squire). Beltona 6014 (10in., 3s.).

**FRED. SUTCLIFFE** (baritone): *Bedouin love song* (Pinsuti) and *Asleep in the deep* (Petrie). Beltona 6015 (10in., 3s.).

**HERBERT TEALE** (tenor): *When all the world is young* (Brewer) and *God bless the morning* (Oliver). Beltona 6016 (10in., 3s.).

**FRIEDRICH SCHORR** (baritone) with orchestra: *Forgotten* (Cowles) and *The Old Road* (Scott). Brunswick 10173 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

**TITO SCHIPA** (tenor) with orchestra: *Pesca d'amore* (Berthélemy) and *Ay, Ay, Ay* (Perez-Freire). Actuelle 10925 (10in., 4s.).

Here are the first two Polydor song records that have been sent for review. The rendering of the Schubert favourites could not, I think, be called superlative. Frequently the phrasing and general smoothness are very short-winded; there is nearly always a big wobble on the full voice, and none too much variety and imagination. In *Der Lindenbaum* the pianist does not differentiate the very important triplet and dotted-note figures. In spite of all, however, *Du bist die Ruh'* casts its spell over the hearer. The recording of these and of the Wolf songs is barely equal to the best English work of the day.

Wolf's exciting *Ratcatcher's Song* in itself makes an interesting record. The free play with the rhythm here may be justifiable; to me, it snaps the thread of the song several times, though everything else is good enough to take up the thread again each time. The vivid orchestration (this song is really a problem in orchestral recording) is excellent in general effect, though very often blurred in detail. The beginning of *Verschwiegene Liebe* has little of the tenderness enjoined by the composer, and there is great freedom throughout; but there is imagination later, and beauty in the end.

The first Duophone record is very promising indeed—a half-crown record which is in the first class for reproduction. Milton Stanley so completely adopts the commonplace style of the songs sung that one cannot judge his powers from this record. He seems to have some tightness occasionally.

One of the choicest records of the month is that of the *Sea Shanties* sung by *John Thorne* and a *Male Trio*. These are really songs to be sung rather than listened to—as a matter of fact this record will probably incite most people to "join in the chorus."

*John Coates* has Christmas in mind. The joyful little French carol is sung just as one expects. After hearing his singing of *The Knight of Bethlehem* I find it impossible to say whether or not there is anything in the music. *Roy Henderson* needs no eulogies, but in this month's records I have enjoyed nothing more than two of

his Northern songs. The arrangement of *The Land o' the Leal* is not very good, and I should prefer longer phrasing and, perhaps, a little more variety of colour in the singing of it. *Walcyn Watcyns* seems never to give a moment's thought to length of phrasing. If one can overlook this shortcoming, *But who may abide* is very satisfying. *Thy Glorious Deeds* is not so good. Not a note is cut on these records, and the orchestral accompaniment is almost always splendid.

*The Cries of London* as sung by *Nancy Royle* and *Michael Head*, seem to be one of the most popular broadcast items. Here are records of them—on the whole excellent.

Another good record is *John Thorne's*. The other two Vocalion records are good records of drawing-room favourites, excepting the folk-song, *The Keys of Heaven*, in the performance of which there seems no sense of rhythm whatever.

H.M.V. have sent a very large number of records this month. Reviews of many of them are unavoidably held over. The recording is consistently on a very high level indeed. The Christmas records of *St. Swithin's Choir* are the best of their type known to me. Technical flaws are scarce. Tone and balance are good, and every word is clear. *The B.N.O.C. Choir* sing the Bach Motet with great spirit and full tone, but there is some raggedness and intonation is seldom sure. *The English Singers* provide an excellent record this month. This is a notable success, for ideal madrigal singing must be one of the severest tests of recording. At the same time, the fact that purely solo passages are not so absolutely clear as in the best solo records suggests that the Singers themselves might yet do more towards producing the ideal record.

*The Sea Shanties* are very good indeed. They sound a little more professional than the Vocalion records, and the words are, perhaps, not quite so clear; but all three Shanty records are not to be missed.

A record to be noted is the first from *Maris Bennett*, the young coloratura soprano who has so quickly gained fame through broadcasting. Her pure voice is heard effectively here, in many beautiful colours; but this music does not do her full justice, nor is she at her best, in a musical sense. She sings with overflowing sentiment, with many hold-ups and with a far from clean vocal line. Perhaps her next record will give us all that we could desire.

*Florence Austral's* Handel aria is on the same high general level as last month's; it has also the same faults, possibly slightly accentuated. There is, moreover, little regard for long phrasing. Rather more trouble seems necessary.

*Emmy Bettendorf* bears out my contention that *Who is Sylvia?* should be sung more smoothly and far slower than it is sung in its English recordings. Otherwise, this is not quite so good as *Heidenröslein* and *Wohin?*, which are highly sensitive. The bass of *Wohin?* is generally completely inaudible. *Jamieson Dodds* sings the two *Elijah* arias with great effect, though without great subtlety. His phrasing is not perfect, and final consonants are overdone. The orchestral accompaniment in *It is enough* is remarkable. There is one rather bad cut. There is little new to say of the *Irmeler Madrigal Choir*. This month's record is very beautiful, but their repertory still fails to show variety.

*Dame Clara Butt* and *Kennerley Rumford* are distinctly below their best here; in particular, this record is inclined to boom. *Carrie Herwin's* record of "Handel's Celebrated Largo" and of *The Lost Chord* is far from perfect (its worst fault is her bad tremolo) but will probably give much pleasure. The other Columbia records are all satisfactory and not of a kind that calls for much comment. Best, perhaps, are the two delightful Irish songs, *Molly Brannigan*, and *The low-backed Car*. The hymns are sung emotionally and extremely powerfully; the organ is very telling. *Dora Labbette* and *Hubert Eisdell* are very effective indeed.

Beltona de Luxe are nothing if not consistent. Here are five more records which practically never fall below a pretty high level of performance and recording; and people who wish for no songs other than such as *Asleep in the Deep* and exhortations to return to Erin will revel in all these five. There is too much faulty intonation and unsteadiness to be passed over lightly in Winifred Brady's records.

The fine voice and manner of *Friedrich Schorr* have of late years become well known to us at Covent Garden. The character of his Brunswick record is unexpected. In broken English he sings two songs of a type which is more familiar to habitués of the second half of the "Prom." concert than to Wagnerites. The songs could hardly receive more dignified interpretation.

*Tito Schipa's* voice is good for other songs besides southern dialect songs, but he certainly makes these intriguing. *Ay, ay, ay* is particularly seductive.

C. M. C.



## BAND RECORDS

## ACO.

- G.15806 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *The Mikado Selection, Parts 1 and 2* (Sullivan).  
 G.15807 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Royal Air Force: *Coronation March* (German) and *Wedding March* (Mendelssohn).  
 G.15808 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of U.S.A. Seventh Regiment: *The Seventh Regiment March* (Neyer) and *Varsity March* (Moore).

## ACTUELLE.

- 15203 (size 12, 3s. 6d.).—Garde Républicaine Band: *Merrie England Selection, Parts 1 and 2* (German).

## DUOPHONE.

- A.1018 (12in., 4s.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Prince Igor Selection, Parts 1 and 2* (Borodine).  
 B.5084 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Minuet No. 1* (Paderewski) and *The Bond of Friendship March* (J. Mackenzie-Rogan).  
 B.5085 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Tarantelle de la Poupée* (Whittman) and *Pals of Yesterday March* (Sir A. C. Mackenzie, arr. Mackenzie-Rogan).

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

- C.1217 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Martial Moments, Parts 1 and 2* (arr. Aubrey Winter).  
 C.1219 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Royal Air Force: *Vanity Fair, Comedy Overture* (P. Fletcher, arr. F. Winterbottom) and *First Heart Throbs* (R. Eilenberg).

## IMPERIAL.

- 1510 (10in., 2s.).—Anderson's Military Band: *Dominion of Canada March* (May Hill) and *Melody of Peace* (Felix le Roy).

## PATHÉ.

- 5220 (size 12, 3s. 6d.).—Garde Républicaine Band: *Mireille Overture, Parts 1 and 2* (Gounod).

## VOCALION.

- K.05200 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *I Pagliacci Selection, Parts 1 and 2* (Leoncavallo).

The new *Mikado* selection is quite capable of holding its own with the previous issues, which by this time must be almost innumerable. By some mysterious means the Aco. record makes the R.A.F. Band sound quite a different combination to the one we hear on H.M.V. records. The beautiful mezzo "orchestral" tone, of which I know Lieut. Amers is so justly proud, has vanished and in its place is rather a brassy tone. The United States Army Band has made an excellent record of two really first-class marches. They are both played with a real swing.

It is always interesting to have such typically English music as *Merrie England* played by foreigners. In this case in addition to the execution being good the true spirit of the music is very successfully captured. The tone is very incisive without being at all harsh. *Mireille* is the usual type of French overture, and it is very instructive to compare the records made by the same band on needle- and phono-cut records respectively. The tone of the Pathé record with an ivory-mounted sapphire is very sweet and refined, but the deeper-toned instruments sound rather like a harmonium. I should like an opportunity of trying a number of Pathé and Actuelle records of the Garde Républicaine Band side by side.

It never rains but it pours, so amid all the excitement of life-belts, new machines, and new recording processes, we find a new record manufacturing company. The Duophone Company have been very fortunate in securing the services of Lieut.-Col. Mackenzie-Rogan as their musical director, and it is a real pleasure to welcome him back to the recording world. Of their first three band records by far the most interesting is the *Prince Igor* selection, which is really the *Ballet Music* from Act II. of the opera. Prince Igor and his son have been taken prisoners by the chief of a Tartar tribe, who gives a banquet in honour of such noble captives, at which they are entertained by these barbaric dances. This interpretation lacks some of the fire with which the H.M.V. record is invested by Albert Coates, but the arrangement is so well managed that only in one place—towards the end of side 2—are the voices really missed. Paderewski's famous minuet is delicately played and the clarinet cadenzas are a delight, but the last few bars are not satisfactory, being very ragged, and this makes the finish fall rather flat. *Tarantelle de la Poupée* is a bright little piece and brilliantly

played, but the two marches are disappointing. The one by Sir A. C. Mackenzie sounds like and probably is an arrangement of a ballad and I like Col. Mackenzie-Rogan much better as a conductor than as a composer. An efficient body of instrumentalists has been got together and these are welded already into a very good band which should be even better before long. The records are well finished, have a good surface, and the balance of tone is good except that the percussion department is lamentably feeble. The cymbals sound as much like someone filling a bucket with coal as anything.

The Imperial record is the most extraordinary value for two shillings that it has been my fortune to find so far. In balance and fullness of tone it could give points to many records at treble its price. Particularly pleasing is the successful recording of the round "fat" tone of the basses and euphonium. Both *Dominion of Canada March* and *Melody of Peace* are tuneful and the two pieces are well contrasted. Not only is this record good value from a recording point of view, but, like most Imperial records, both sides are well filled. Each takes approximately 3½ minutes to play at the correct speed.

Both the new H.M.V. issues are new recordings and as such have quite a distinctive tone, but I shall defer any general comparisons between the old and new methods of recording so far as bands are concerned until more records made by the new system are available. *Martial Moments* is a pot-pourri of snippets from well-known and favourite marches and is played with great verve. The depth of tone sounds more like a full band than anything I have heard yet from a gramophone. *Vanity Fair Overture* is very gay and sparkling, but *First Heart Throbs* is nothing like as exciting as it should be with a title like that! The latter is rather spoilt by the fact that the bells, which are extensively used, are out of pitch with the other instruments. By the way, the H.M.V. mid-November supplement contains a curious error. This band is referred to as a "Brass band." As Punch might say, another impending apology!

The voice parts in the selection from *I Pagliacci* are not very happily arranged, and although playing and recording are up to the high standards the Life Guards Band and the Vocalion Company have set for themselves I could not quite rid myself of the feeling that the band were playing this because they felt such a popular selection ought to be included in their repertoire rather than because they really wanted to play it.

W. A. C.

## NEW-POOR RECORDS

Once again the month's inexpensive productions have beaten all previous records for general merit. Really, if anyone had as much as £50 to lay out in one purchase I could give him a list of two-shilling, half-crown, and four-shilling numbers, every one of which would be second to none of its kind, and which would absorb the whole of the money.

ACO.—At the head of this list I place what is to me the most perfect contralto record of the month, Elsie Francis-Fisher's *Sink Red Sun* and *There's a Land*, on one disc (2s. 6d.). Of all the remarkably good CONTRALTO recordings on the Aco list I like this the best and this singer's work should be sedulously followed. An ORCHESTRAL number a little hard in tone, played by the Marlborough Orchestra, *Minuet and Serenade* (2s. 6d.). Two other nice records are *The Roundelay*, by a MALE VOICE QUARTETTE (2s. 6d.), and *Myself when Young* (2s. 6d.), sung by Hamilton Harris, BASS.—The new address of the Vocalion Co., Ltd., is 2, Duncan Avenue, W.C. 1.

BELTONE.—My best half-crown ORCHESTRAL record to date is *Cortège*; it shows the drums well. Another good one, but light in character, is *Wedgwood Blue* (2s. 6d.). Two charming CHILDREN'S NUMBERS, by the Palm Beach Marimba Band, are *Prisoner's Song* (2s. 6d.) and *Sometime* (2s. 6d.). A SOPRANO record that is going into my collection is the 10in. disc Gounod's *Ave Maria* and *Ora Pro Nobis*, sung by Winifred Brady. WALTZ: *The Midnight Waltz* (2s. 6d.). SCOT'S NUMBER: *Bonnie Wee Thing* (2s. 6d.), Vocal Duet.

DUOPHONE.—A new make of records from 18, Savile Row, W. 1. I hear that they are very good, and at the time of writing I have not yet been able to judge for myself.

HOMOCHORD.—Perfect PIANOFORTE records are *Gavotte*, Gluck-Brahms, played by Sirota (4s.), and *Tea for Two* (2s. 6d.), most



charmingly arranged. VIOLIN AND PIANO: Fully and proportionately recorded *Madrigale*, Simonetti, played by Pollak (4s.). TANGOS: A particularly good 12in. number, played for dancing to is *The Devil's Tango* (4s.). A half-crown number of some beauty is *Besos Frios*. A late arrival. PIANOFORTE: A banquet interlude arrangement of *Drink to me only*, played by Stanley Holt (2s. 6d.). ORCHESTRAL: On a friend's advice I bought *The Merchant of Venice* (two 4s. discs). The music is exceedingly pretty and the recording clean and true.

IMPERIAL.—Those who have an agent in their vicinity should hear the CHILDREN'S NUMBER: *Kiddies' Dance* (2s.), and the ORCHESTRAL number, *Mercenary Mary* selection. There is another BAND disc (drumless) of the excellently recorded *Regimental Marches*. TANGO: *La Paloma*.

PARLOPHONE.—The ancient and the ultra modern, primitive austerity and voluptuous grace are completely contrasted in two sets each of three 10in. records. In one of these the *Plainsong* melodies for the Mass and Benediction of the Roman Catholic Church are given as sung by the soldierly voices of the Westminster Cathedral choristers; the recording is magnificent and the surface irreproachable. All Romanists will buy the entire set and all who are not should at least order the *O Salutaris*. The solo voice reminds one of Kennerley Rumford's. The other set comprises six TANGOS recorded as perfectly as they are played by the three correctly constituted and principal dance orchestras of Buenos Aires. In every one of them the music makes one sway in the step of the dance. Get *Lazos de Seda* and you will want all the others.

REGAL.—There are no brass BRASS BAND recordings I like so well as these. *Joan of Arc*, played by the St. Hilda Colliery Band on two half-crown discs, is a good example. One of the best of Manuello's VIOLIN recordings is the *Obertass Mazurka* (2s. 6d.). There is also the best record I have heard of *The Rebel*, from "Freebooters' Songs," W. Wallace, sung by Kenneth Walters (2s. 6d.).

VELVET FACE.—New Address: 1, Newton Street, Holborn Bars, London. All Zacharewitch's VIOLIN solos are now well known. I think his best is *Gipsy Airs* (4s.). I have just bought the two OBOE and ORCHESTRA concerted numbers, *Handel's Sonata* (4s.) and *Concertino* (2s. 6d.). I think them both exquisite. A CONTRALTO record, sung in French, and good enough for the most fastidious, is Massenet's *Elegie*, sung by Makushina.

ZONOPHONE.—Browning Mummery is always a refined TENOR singer of popular numbers, *Bouquet* (2s. 6d.). There is no better vocal recording for the Tenor voice than Zonophone and the surface of these records is now excellent.

ULTIMATE SELECTIONS.—ORCHESTRAL: 12in., *The Merchant of Venice* (HOMO.). 10in., *Cortège* (BELTONA). PIANOFORTE: 12in., *Gavotte* (HOMO.). 10in., *Drink to me only* (HOMO.). SOPRANO: 10in., Gounod's *Ave Maria* (BELTONA). CONTRALTO: 10in., *Sink Red Sun* (ACO). *Elegie* (VELVET FACE). TENOR: 10in., *Bouquet* (ZONO.). VIOLIN: 12in., *Madrigale* (HOMO.). 10in., *Obertass Mazurka* (REGAL). OBOE AND ORCHESTRA: 12in., *Handel's Sonata*. TANGOS: 12in., *The Devil's Tango* (HOMO.). 10in., *Lazos de Seda* (PARLO.). PLAINSONG: *O, Salutaris* (PARLO.). CHILDREN'S NUMBER: *Sometime* (BELTONA).

N.B.—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H. T. B.

\* \* \*

## Exchange and Mart

Half a page of free entries—in accordance with the offer in the September number—were unfortunately held over last month; but they will be found in this number on p. xxxv.

## MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS

Two omissions last month must be rectified. One is H.M.V. B.2113 (3s.), on which the Stanton Brothers record the absurd dialogue which they perpetrated at the Hippodrome in the Vincent Lopez show earlier in the year. At least that is where I saw them in their Eton jackets, bowing to each other and saying, "Cut yourself a piece of cake," "No thanks, really—I've just had a cup of tea." Anyhow, the record is a brilliant souvenir of their turn if you want to remember it. The other omission is Art Gillham, the whispering pianist, on Col. 3748 (3s.), a startlingly faithful record of an American humorist who has an infectious way of singing nonsense. I hope we shall have more from him.

Nick Lucas, who sings to his guitar accompaniment, has done his best record so far on Brunswick 2940 (3s.), in his own *I might have known* and in *I'm tired of everything but you*, by the famous Isham Jones. His mastery of the guitar and his plaintive voice make a pleasant effect of intimacy. But, of course, if you want intimacy, and an English voice as well, you must not miss Melville Gideon in *Funny Little Tune* and *The Longest Day* (H.M.V. B.2142, 3s.). This is one of the most charming of all. The funny little tune—is it *Weel may the keel row*?—runs in the head all day; and the love-ballad is an admirable example of the short-comings, venial as they are, no less than of the excellencies of Gideonism.

I do not know what a vibraphone is, but with an orchestral accompaniment it makes an unexpectedly attractive record of Scotch and Irish melodies in the hands of Joseph Green on Brunswick 2840 (3s.). This is a quiet record; but for sheer exhilarating idiocy I commend Wendall Hall with his banjo on H.M.V. B.2152 (3s.). Very good fooling in the broadest American. Mario Chamlee's *Give me One Rose to remember* and *I look into your garden* (Brunswick 10201, 4s. 6d.) has somehow found its way into my basket, and the incongruity of that lovely voice and those palsied songs is disquieting. I know that McCormack and Hempel and others condescend to sing these things for an adoring American public; but Chamlee is just not good enough to carry them off. Only the greatest actors can shed tears on the stage without making the audience feel embarrassed.

The Savoy Orpheans have made a most lively record of a *Round the World Medley* (H.M.V. C.1223, 4s. 6d.), with such a variety of well-known airs as to display their versatility and virtuosity. But the facetious *cicerone* is extremely trying. Cyril Newton sings *Sunny Havana* and *Babette* on H.M.V. B.2151 (3s.), both good tunes, with his usual efficiency; and I should recommend the Salon Orchestra on H.M.V. B.2138 (3s.) for a good version of *Yearning*, if the *Warblings at Eve* on the other side were not so trying. Even if they were real birds one would want to move a little further off. Another queer American record is Brunswick 2911 (3s.), wherein one, Vernon Dalhart, a tenor, sings *The Runaway Train* and *Chain Gang Song* to an accompaniment of guitar and chromonica—a sort of accordion. People who specialise in out-of-the-way records should secure this, but it is not one that I dare recommend generally with confidence.

Of the December Vocalions, two records especially surprised me. I never thought I should like Hawaiian guitars or accordion solos. But X.9673 (3s.), *Just Lonesome* and *In the Heart of Hawaii*, played by Ferrera and Palalulu, are charming; and so are the *Hindu March* and *Guarany Selection* on X.9679 (3s.), played by Palet Gallarini, who is a master of his instrument and plays with great taste. Gene Gerrard, the life and soul of *Katja the Dancer*, will make better records than his *Zoo-Keeper* (X.9669, 3s.), but it is very amusing and lively in parts. The humour of Nelson Keys, which I always thought I could enjoy, is completely dead in *Bachelor Reflections* and *The London Guide* (X.9670, 3s.). I can hardly believe that it will become a favourite record with anyone.

The Acos are a good lot, the *Tell Me More* selection on G.15829. (2s. 6d.) being just sixpence better than that of the Grosvenor Orchestra on Voc. K.9671 (3s.). The comedian of the old Vocalion single-sided operatic records, Eric Foster, tells the story of *Dick Whittington* for the children (G.15825, 2s. 6d.); Earl and Bell sing *Got no Time* and *Just a Bundle of Sunshine* (G.15837, 2s. 6d.); Billy Desmond is as good as ever in *Wondering* and *Normandy* (G.15835, 2s. 6d.), and helps Dick Henderson in about the best version of *Sunny Havana* on G.15834 (2s. 6d.). Harry Topping is excellent in that good tune, *Yes, Sir, that's my Baby* (G.15836, 2s. 6d.); but Ukulele Hughes is disappointing on the other side.

Of the other December records that have come to me in heaps I can only winnow out a few that deserve special notice. The level is extremely high. Harry Reser's banjo solos (Col. 3797, 3s.),



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### Vocals

- 1520 { Sunny Havana (H. Nicholls).  
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.  
When the Bloom is on the Heather.  
Sung by Jock Walker, with Orchestral Accomp.  
Just Like a Baby (Ender and Ward).  
Sung by Jimmy Campbell, with Incidental Piano Accomp.  
1519 { by G. Connolly, joint writers of "Show me the Way to Go Home."  
Good-bye, Sal! (Creamer, Schuster and Jentes).  
Sung by Lionel Rothery, with Orchestral Accomp.  
1518 { Oh! She does look Nice (Mackey and Lowry). Comedy Song.  
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.  
Why do Short Men like Tall Girls? (Reg. Tabbush). Comedy Song.  
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.  
1517 { Wondering (Gartman and Leslie).  
Sung by Guy Victor, with Accomp. by the Imperial Trio.  
Mamie (Jack Shilkret).  
Sung by Lionel Rothery, with Orchestral Accomp.  
1516 { I'll see you in my Dreams (Isham Jones).  
Sung by Syd Jefferson, with Accomp. by the Imperial Trio.  
Bouquet (H. Nicholls).  
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.  
1515 { It's a Man Every Time, It's a Man (Dublin, McHugh and Dash).  
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.  
Just a Dream of You, Dear (F. Klickman).  
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.

### Duets by Hall & Ryan, the famous American Duettists

- 1514 { Yes, Sir, that's my Baby (Kahn and Donaldson).  
I Miss my Swiss (My Swiss Miss Misses Me) (Gilbert and Baer).

### Christmas Record

- 1513 { Kiddies' Patrol (Christmas Eve). Descriptive.  
Orchestral Accomp. by Walter Rogers.  
Kiddies' Dance (Christmas Morning). Descriptive.  
Orchestral Accomp. by Walter Rogers.

### Eddie Peabody's Banjo Records (with Vocal Chorus)

- 1512 { I Miss My Swiss (My Swiss Miss Misses Me) (Gilbert and Baer).  
Yes, Sir, that's my Baby (Kahn and Donaldson).

### Anderson's Military Band

- 1511 { Regimental Marches, No. 1 (Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots, Irish,  
and Welsh Guards).  
Regimental Marches, No. 2 (East Kent, Royal Lances, Royal  
Warwicks, King's Liverpool, Norfolk and Lincs Regiments).  
1510 { Dominion of Canada March (May Hill).  
Melody of Peace (Felix le Roy). Gavotte.

### Selections from the Latest Musical Comedy Successes played by Anderson's Symphonic Orchestra

- 1509 { No, No, Nanette. Part 1. (Vincent Youmans). Selection.  
No, No, Nanette. Part 2. (Vincent Youmans). Selection.  
1508 { Rose Marie. Part 1. (Rudolf Friml.) Selection.  
Rose Marie. Part 2. (Rudolf Friml.) Selection.  
1507 { Katja the Dancer. Part 1. (Jean Gilbert.)  
Katja the Dancer. Part 2. (Jean Gilbert.)  
1506 { Mercenary Mary. Part 1.  
Mercenary Mary. Part 2.

### Dances

- 1505 { In Tangoland (Newton, Campbell and Connolly). Tango.  
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.  
Sunny Havana (H. Nicholls). Tango.  
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.  
1504 { La Paloma (Yradier). Tango.  
Played by Hollywood Dance Orchestra.  
Marcheta (V. Schertzinger). Tango Fox Trot.  
Played by Glantz and his Orchestra.  
1503 { La Rosita (Paul Dupont). Tango.  
Spain (Isham Jones). Tango Fox Trot.  
Played by the Imperial Dance Orchestra.  
Chick, Chick, Chick, Chick, Chicken (Holt, Ghee and King).  
Fox Trot. Played by Salon Crystal Orchestra.  
1502 { Good-bye Sal! (Creamer, Schuster and Jentes). Fox Trot.  
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra. (Vocal chorus  
Geo. Berry).

A SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF NEW TITLES WILL BE ISSUED MONTHLY.

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or **Frank Ferera's** steel guitar "novelties" (Col. 3746, 3s.), or **Liam Walsh's** Irish pipes record (H.M.V. B.2157, 3s.) are, for instance, admirable in their *genre*, but not to everyone's taste. Of the singers, **Wendall Hall** scores again on H.M.V. B.2176 (3s.), especially in *Sunshine*; **Frank Crumit**, too, in *Sonya* and *I Married the Bootlegger's Daughter* (H.M.V. B.2179, 3s.); **Cyril Newton** does his best with that maddeningly stupid song *Chick, Chick, Chicken* (H.M.V. B.2156, 3s.); **Layton and Johnstone**, with three records (Col. 3791, 3792, 3793, 3s.), are adding rapidly every month to their list, almost to the point of monotony, but their exquisite sense of rhythm never fails—a sort of graceful smartness it is; **Norah Blaney** and **Gwen Farrar** are pleasant in three more (Col. 3788, 3789, 3790, 3s. each) with their mocking sentimentality and, I think, clearer enunciation than usual. Of light orchestral pieces there is the *Poem of Fibich*—always welcome—played by the **J. H. Squire Celeste Octet** (Col. 3796, 3s.), the *Indian Love Call*, and *Sanderson's Until*, played with more saccharine then ever by *de Groot* (H.M.V. B.2168, 3s.), and a strikingly well-recorded *Nola* and *The Glow-worm Idyll*, by the *Salon Orchestra* (H.M.V. B.2169, 3s.).

It is most refreshing to get **Billy Williams** singing *Here we are again* on Aco. G.15759 (2s. 6d.), but I could have sworn that this was one of my pre-war favourites. Anyhow, it is still bursting with *bonhomie* and has *Wait till I'm as old as father* on the other side. **Clarkson Rose**, not usually a favourite of mine, deserves mention for *The Drage way* (Zono. 2645, 2s. 6d.), a funny song which was worth putting on record. Are there two **Vernon Dalharts**, as there are two **Winston Churchills**? The one who sings on Parlo. E.5494 (2s. 6d.) is very versatile if he is the same as the Brunswick singer, but I like him less. I do like **Bruce Wallace** who sings *A Kiss in the moonlight* and *You forgot to remember* on Parlo. E.5490 (2s. 6d.), crudely but with just a hint of McCormack's voice which is promising for the future. The only 12in. Parlophone in my heap is an **Edith Lorand Orchestra** record of the *Japanese lantern dance* and *Mah-Jong Characteristic*; pseudo-oriental enough, but none the less rather attractive.

There are plenty of specifically Christmas nursery records, but I have not heard a single one which I would encourage a child to hear.

Of monologues **Milton Hayes** comes easily first with his talk about bananas and advertisements (Col. 3801, 3s.). No one should miss this. The rustling of a newspaper does not record very well—no better than the telephone in Melville Gideon's *I'm in love with a voice*, last month. **Vivian Foster** gives the *Parson's Christmas Address* on Col. 3812 (3s.) and **John Henry**, with Blossom intervening, discourses on his *Wireless Set* (H.M.V. B.2165, 3s.).

When I saw the altogether charming and lively *Mercenary Mary* at the Hippodrome (by the courtesy of the management, let me add, for there was little chance of getting a seat at short notice unaided) I wondered much whether any of the very poor voices would record at all. It seemed such a pity that such charming people should not be able to sing. I have been waiting impatiently for the Columbia records of the play, and, alas! it is only too true. "June" and Miss O'Neill (admittedly a musical enthusiast) and Sonnie Hale have made sad work of their excellent songs; Lew Hearn is just himself, a prolonged squeak, and only **Baskcomb** (with unmitigated lisp) does himself justice. His record (Col. 3810, 3s.), *There's nothing to live for*, with "June's" one success, *Over my shoulder*, on the other side is well worth getting, and so is the brilliant *Selection* (Col. 9062, 4s. 6d.), which is first rate, with **Leonard Hornsey** conducting and **Percival Mackey** himself playing a couple of solos on the piano. If anyone prefers a cheaper *Selection* I can recommend the **Moschetto** version, very delicately played on Voc. X9672 (3s.) and a rather balder, louder version on Imperial 1506 (2s.), played by Anderson's always efficient symphonic orchestra. *I'm thinking of you* is well sung, as a solo, by **Billy Desmond** on Aco. G.15811 (2s. 6d.) and by his Siamese twin **Frank Gilbert**, on Duophone B.5088 (2s. 6d.); but apart from these there are none, among all that I have tried, worth keeping, except, of course, the dance records, which are out of my province.

PEPPERING.

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## DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

THE first thing to call attention to this month is the new arrangement of these notes. It has been felt that the method of listing the records up to the present has given undue prominence to those which are only second rate on account of the fact that they alone have been "listed," while the titles of the best records have been somewhat hidden in the solid mass of the article. All the records are now listed together, except the intolerably bad ones which are crowded out, and consigned, let us pray fervently, to oblivion. If the classification is now a little slavish, it is only for fear of being misunderstood and in order to make reference to particular records easier than it was. Thus records which have a fox-trot on one side and a waltz on the other, or some other combination, are now listed under both headings whatever they may be.

All the prophecies and rhapsodies of the daily press, the efforts of the teachers of ballroom dancing, the enterprise of go-ahead hotels and the captivated praises of the enthusiasts, seem to have failed signally to popularise the tango. Where are we to look for the explanation? For myself I have discovered none that gives a complete answer to the riddle—for it is nothing less than that—but one or two suggestions occur to me that may put us on the right track. I refuse to believe that it is a dance too subtle for the mere amateur, because anyone who comes to learn its simpler steps will laugh at their simplicity. But this, at least, is true: it is different from what we have become only too accustomed to dance. Its rhythms are different, the atmosphere created by the music is different, and the carriage of the body in performing the dance is different also. So the person who wishes to learn the tango must forget for the moment that he is an expert at the fox-trot and place himself absolutely in his teacher's hands. That ever-suffering individual knows only too well how rarely this happens. The ballroom dancer, like most other human beings, is not entirely a rational animal, and he does not realise that he would be conversant with the tango already if he were really omniscient. And what dancer does not think himself omniscient? Having put himself in his teacher's hands, like so much clay animated by the potter on his wheel, he must have music to which he may perform the steps which he is attempting to learn. And here comes a second stumbling block. Where is there music which is adequately played? We have many bands which play so-called tango-foxtrots and others which think they play tangos and really play nothing of the kind, partly because they are not properly equipped to do so. The gramophone records fall into the same categories. The band which plays for the Gramophone Company is properly equipped, but underestimates the ability and impressionability of its audience; the Tipica Orchestra chooses its tunes badly; the Vocalion bands, for the most part, are not tango bands at all, and we are left with the Columbia bands, which play in Paris a French version of what we seek. This is hardly encouraging, and one would have thought that an enterprising company could manage to give us the best of the real thing. The Parlophone records are quite pleasant to listen to, provided that one does not play them too often, and thus discover their real monotony, but are not very suitable for dancing. Perhaps there is better to come. But there is yet another reason hinted at above, why people will not take up the dance, and that is that they cannot and will not realise that it is not difficult to perform, even if it is something quite different from the other ballroom dances. A simple difficulty of this kind is more than we can tackle, paradoxical as it may appear to be.

This means, I suppose, that except in a few select corners where the tango has been played and danced for quite a long time, the absence of support given by dancers to the bands which play for them will discourage the latter and send them back to the fox-trot. There is a notoriously heavy infant mortality among ballroom dances, and it seems that we may be already following the tango to the cemetery, where the Charleston and the Blues lie newly buried. But let us not be too hasty. Since we are all aware of the enormous influence of the gramophone, we may still hope that there are hordes of dancers practising the tango to their newly-acquired records and preparing to descend on the Christmas ballrooms to show us properly how the thing is done. We wish them well in the midst of their many difficulties and hope soon to see them victorious, putting their richer hotel-going friends to shame at their lack of assiduous practice.

If we have not this new interest to look forward to, wherever shall we be? The waltz seems to have no life left in it at all,

and the fox-trot is perilously near to the slipping slope to perdition. The new tunes in both these categories are for the most part poor, and we seem to fall further and further into the captivity of the musical comedy song. I will not express my own opinion on that because it would be unprintable, yet I feel that there are many who agree with me. Perhaps they are silent for similar reasons.

## TANGOS.

PARLO., 12in. E.10379.—*Pajarito* and *Jueves* (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). Both these tunes are notable for their absence of monotony and nice variations of rhythm. The second is the more melodious of the two and really quite enchanting.

PARLO., 12in. E.10380.—*Melodie du Rêve* and *Le Lys Noir* (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). The first has an atmosphere of seriousness with a perfectly entrancing bass; the second is more delicate and has subtler rhythms.

PARLO. R.3201.—*Aquella Noche* and *Tierra Mia* (played and recorded in the Argentine by the Orquesta Tipica, conducted by Roberto Firpo). Spirited with beautiful phrasing. Both delightful tunes.

PARLO. R.3200.—*Amigaso* and *Sentimiento Gaucho* (played and recorded in the Argentine by the Orquesta Tipica, conducted by Roberto Firpo).

ACO. G.15844.—*Por ti* (Harry Bidgood and his Tango Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Played rather faster and more robustly than the Vocalion record, but with a too obvious beat in the accompaniment.

VOC. X.9681.—*Viva el Principe* and *Rosita* (La Villa Splendide Tango Band). Neither is very satisfying, but both are better than the other recordings.

PARLO. R.3202.—*Alfredo* and *Lazos de Seda* (played and recorded in the Argentine by the Orquesta Tipica, the first conducted by Francisco Canaro, and the second by Juan Maglio).

IMP. 1504.—*La Paloma* (Hollywood Dance Orchestra) and see "Tango-Foxtrots."

VOC. X.9683.—*La Mantilla* and *Por ti* (Geoffrey Goodhart and his Orchestra). The best of the tangos by non-tango bands.

VOC. X.9682.—*Le Lys Noir* and *Spain* (Geoffrey Goodhart and his Orchestra).

ACO. G.15846.—*Fredyse Tango* (Bobby Hind and his Band) and see "Fox-trots." An amusing record.

ZONO. 2639.—*Mirala como se va* and *Mano Santa* (Manuel Pizarro's Argentine Orchestra).

## TANGO-FOXTROTS.

IMP. 1504.—*Marcheta* (Glantz and his Orchestra) and see "Tangos."

## WALTZES.

PARLO. 12in. E.10381.—*Kaiser Waltz, Parts 1 and 2* (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). This is as good a record as one could seek and certainly as good as any one can get, but we have come to expect this of Marek Weber. The music needs no description.

PARLO. E.5489.—*Where are you to-night?* and *Sometime* (Edith Lorand Orchestra). The first is rather ecstatic than sentimental, the second sprightly and joyous. Both have perfect orchestration.

H.M.V. \*B.2171.—*Always* (V.) (Savoy Havana Band) and see "Fox-trots." We have longed to have another waltz from the Savoy Havana Band and here we have it—a good tune with a fine bass part.

COL. \*3787.—*Come back* (V.) and *Poem* (New Princes Toronto Band). I have always liked *Poem* and welcome a new version of it. These are very different from the Parlophone waltzes, but with distinct merits of their own.

H.M.V. \*B.2158.—*Funny* and *Sometime* (Jack Shelkret's Orchestra). Personally I don't care much for the composition of this band, but I see that others must like it and recommend this record for those who don't like the Parlo. *Sometime*.

VOC. X.9677.—*Golden Memories of Hawaii* (Miami Marimba Band) and see "Fox-trots." The best of the Marimba bands, but in my opinion spoilt by the xylophone.



DUO. B.5092.—\*\**You told me you loved me* (V.) and \**When you and I were seventeen* (Colonnade Dance Orchestra).

ACO. G.15818.—\**Take me back to your heart* (the Pacific Marimba Band) and \**Pal of my cradle days* (Washington Dance Players).

BEL. 857.—\**Prisoner's Song* (Palm Beach Marimba Band) and see "One-steps."

VOC. X.9676.—\**My Hawaiian Evenin' Star* (Miami Marimba Band) and see "Fox-trots."

VOC. X.9675.—\**Funny* (the Tuxedo Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Quite funny!

### ONE-STEPS.

ACO. G.15813.—\**Collegiate* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."

BEL. 857.—\**Collegiate* (New Orleans Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."

### FOXTROTS.

H.M.V. \*B.2175.—*Manhattan* and *Rhythm Rag* (Paul Whiteman). A really first-class Paul Whiteman and a first-class record altogether. Marvellous orchestration, wonderful volume and amazing virtuosity, without Whiteman's more extreme eccentricities.

H.M.V. \*B.2171.—*Moonlight and Roses* (Savoy Orpheans) and see "Waltzes." Played with beautiful restraint and real artistry. Quite the best record of the tune.

COL. \*3786.—*Save your sorrow for to-morrow* (V.) and *Sunny Havana* (V.) (New Princes Toronto Band). A splendid record of two good tunes—the second rather a catchy one.

H.M.V. \*B.2162.—*Molly and A cup of coffee, a sandwich and you* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra). Jack Hylton in his own incomparable way makes the very best of two rather sketchy tunes.

VOC. X.9676.—*In the Purple Twilight* (The Ambassadors) and see "Waltzes." Another small gem from a distinguished orchestra.

H.M.V. \*B.2167.—*It's one of those things* and \**River-boat Shuffle* (Kit-Cat Band). Virtuosity, spoils a little by stunting.

PARLO. E.5483.—\**Sleeping Beauty's wedding* and \**Silver Head* (Vincent Lopez and his Orchestra). Not as good as some of Vincent Lopez's but well worth having.

H.M.V. \*B.2146.—\**Sally's come back* (V.) and *Sunny Havana* (V.) (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

H.M.V. \*B.2147.—\**Honest and truly* (V.) and \**I'm tired of everything but you* (V.) (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

VOC. X.9647.—\**I'm tired of everything but you* and \**Desert Isle* (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra). Ben Selvin is unrivalled for his rhythm, but, may I say it, does not give quite a fair chance to the melody?

VOC. X.9645.—\**When eyes of blue are fooling you* (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra) and \**Lollypop* (the Tuxedo Orchestra). The first has a good piano part, the second a prominent banjo part.

ACT. 10945.—\**Ukulele Lady* (V.) (Lew Gold and his Orchestra) and *Collegiate* (V.) (Selvin's Dance Orchestra). Sung quite amusingly.

ACO. G.15815.—\**Ghetto* (Louis Leblanc and his Parisian Orchestra) and \**The Hylton Medley* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).

ACO. G.15817.—\**If you've got no sweetie of your own* and \**Paradise* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra). The prize tune, *Paradise*, is certainly nicely balanced, even if not very original.

ZONO. 2631.—\**O Katharina* and \**Yearning* (Max Darewski's Dance Band). Max Darewski must have many followers.

BRUN. 2898.—*Hold me in your arms* and \**Phoebe Snow* (Ray Miller and his Orchestra). Both have all the good Brunswick characteristics and quite pleasant melodies.

BRUN. 2894.—\**By the light of the stars* (Bennie Krueger's Orchestra) and \**Danger* (Isham Jones Orchestra).

BRUN. 2893.—\**Beside a siln'ry stream* and \**Roamin' around* (Herb Wiedoeft's Cinderella Roof Orchestra). The first tune has beautiful high notes without any symptom of stridency; the second is almost a blues.

BRUN. 2875.—\**I'm so ashamed* (V.) and \**Ukulele Lady* (Oriole Orchestra). The *Ukulele Lady* is almost as good as any I know, although a little strident.

ACO. G.15813.—\**Desert flower* (V.) (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "One-steps." Jeffries' Orchestra is still unrivalled for its voices.

H.M.V. \*B.2163.—\**Paddlin' Madelin Home* and \**When the blossom is on the heather* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra). Amazing virtuosity.

H.M.V. \*B.2164.—\**As the days go by* and \**Every Sunday afternoon* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

H.M.V. \*B.2165.—\**Summer Nights* (Don Bestor and Orchestra) and \**Dreaming of to-morrow* (V.) (Coon Sanders Original Orchestra). Cut out the tricks.

H.M.V. \*B.2173.—\**Charleston baby of mine* and \**Normandy* (V.) (Savoy Orpheans).

ACO. G.15844.—\**Moonlight and Roses* (V.) (the Indiana Melodists) and see "Tangos."

ACO. G.15846.—\**Farewell, my love, farewell* (Bobby Hink and his Orchestra) and see "Tangos." Quite fascinating.

ACO. G.15842.—\**Araby* (V.) and *The Savoy Christmas Medley* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).

ACO. G.15839.—\**Hugo, I go where you go* (V.) (the Washington Dance Players) and \**Let's wander away* (the Cleveland Society Orchestra).

BRUN. 2866.—\**Moonlight and roses* (V.) and \**Just a little drink* (V.) (Ray Miller and his Orchestra). A band thoroughly to be recommended; vocal parts might be better.

DUO. B.5091.—*Yes, Sir, that's my baby* (Colonnade Dance Orchestra) and \**Lady of my cigarette* (the Monterey Dance Band).

DUO. B.5093.—\**Mercenary Mary* (Ben Russell's Dance Band) and \**Why do I love you?* (the Savile Dance Band).

PARLO. E.5486.—\**Cecilia* and \**Marguerita* (the Melody Sheiks).

COL. \*3780.—\**She's drivin' me wild* and \**I can't see the beautiful sea* (V.) (the Denza Dance Band). So far as dancing is concerned, it could hardly be bettered, but why are not those fine bass notes exploited more?

H.M.V. \*B.2174.—\**Stomp off, let's go* (Savoy Orpheans) and \**I've got a real daddy now* (Savoy Havana Band).

VOC. X.9678.—\**Sonya* (V.) and \**Mamie* (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra). Both are played with fine verve—with an amusing vocal part.

VOC. X.9675.—*Manhattan* (the Night Club Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." Very different from the Whiteman record but good in spite of that.

VOC. X.9677.—\**I miss my Swiss* (V.) (the Tuxedo Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."

N.B.—In the above list the titles of all the best records are printed in heavy type (Clarendon), the first six in the list of each tune being in order of merit, the rest are in *italics*. The use of asterisks is a further effort to denote comparative merit. An asterisk against a serial number indicates that all the latest improvements in recording have been used, which give greatly increased volume of sound with complete freedom from "blasting."

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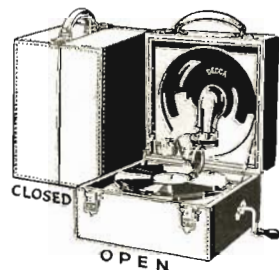
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## TRANSLATIONS

(Contributed by H. F. V. LITTLE)

ACH, ICH FÜHL'S, ES IST  
VERSCHWUNDEN

(Ah, lo so, più non m'avanza—Pamina's Aria.)

(Die Zauberflöte (Magic Flute)—Mozart.)

Jurjevskaja, Parlophone E10278, 12in., d.s.  
Schumann, Polydor 65811, 12in., d.s., black.  
Reinhardt, Polydor 72776, 12in., d.s., red.

Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden  
Ah, lo so, più non m'avanza  
*Atas, I feel that the joy of Love*

Ewig hin der Liebe Glück,  
Che lagnarmi ognor così,  
*Has vanished for evermore !*

Ewig hin der Liebe Glück !  
Che lagnarmi ognor così.

Nimmer kommt ihr, Wonnestunden,  
Ho perduto la speranza  
*Blissful hours, you will come*

Meinem Herzen mehr zurück,  
Di tornar felice un di,  
*And cheer my heart no more.*

Meinem Herzen, meinem Herzen mehr zurück !  
Di tornar, di tornar felice un di !

Sieh, Tamino, diese Tränen,  
Ah, per te se invan degg'io  
*Dear Tamino, see these tears,*

Fliessen, Trauter, dir allein, dir allein.  
Pianger sempre e sospirar, sospirar,  
*Which flow for you alone.*

Fühlst du nicht der Liebe Sehnen, der Liebe Sehnen,  
Più pietosa al pianto mio, al pianto mio,  
*If you should no longer love me*

So wird Ruh', so wird Ruh' im Tode sein.  
Tronchi morte il mio penar, il mio penar.  
*Death alone will give me peace.*

Fühlst du nicht . . . , etc.  
Più pietosa . . . , etc.

## DER HÖLLE RACHE

(Die Zauberflöte—Mozart.)

Eden, Polydor 65605, 12in., d.s., black.  
Hempel, H.M.V., D.B.365, 12in., d.s., red.  
Ivogün, Polydor 85310, 12in., d.s., grey.  
Meyen, Polydor 65634, 12in., d.s., black.  
Fritzi Jokl, Parlophone E10373, 12in.  
Luella Melius, H.M.V., D.A.723, 10in., red.

Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen,  
*The vengeance of Hell is burning in my heart,*  
:| Tod und Verzweiflung |: flammet um mich her !  
*Death and despair are blazing around me !*

Fühlt nicht durch dich :| Sarastro Todesschmerzen, |:   
*If Sarastro does not feel through you the agonies of death,*

So bist du meine Tochter nimmermehr,  
*Then nevermore are you my daughter !*

So bist du mein', :| meine Tochter nimmermehr, |:

So bist du meine Tochter nimmermehr !

Verstossen sei auf ewig, verlassen sei auf ewig,  
*Be disowned and forsaken for evermore,*

Zertrümmert sei'n auf ewig alle Bande der Natur,  
*Let all ties of Nature be burst apart for ever*  
Verstossen, verlassen und zertrümmert alle Bande der Natur,  
Alle Bande, alle Bande der Natur  
Wenn nicht durch dich Sarastro wird erblassen !  
*If Sarastro does not fall by your hand !*  
Hört, hört, hört, hört, Rachegötter !  
*Hear, hear, hear, hear me, Gods of Vengeance !*  
Hört der Mutter Schwur !  
*Hear a mother's vow !*

ACH, ICH LIEBTE, WAR SO  
GLÜCKLICH

(Die Entführung aus dem Serail—Mozart.)

F. Huni-Mihacsek, Polydor 65638, 12in., d.s., black.  
S. Meyen, Polydor 65747, 12in., d.s., black.

Ach, ich liebte, :| war so glücklich,  
*Ah, I loved, I was so happy,*

Kannte nicht der Liebe Schmerz, |:   
*Did not know the pain of love,*

:| Schwur ihm Treue, dem Geliebten, |:   
*Pledged my faith to him, my loved one,*

:| Gab dahin mein ganzes Herz. |:   
*Gave him all my heart.*

:| Doch wie schnell schwand meine Freude, |:   
*But how quickly my joy vanished,*

Trennung war mein banges Los ;   
*Parting was my bitter lot ;*

Und nun schwimmt mein Aug' in Tränen,   
*Now my eyes are bathed in tears*

Mein Auge schwimmt in Tränen,  
Es schwimmt in Tränen,

:| Kummer ruht in meinem Schoss, |:   
*And sorrow dwells within my breast.*

In meinem Schoss,

:| Kummer ruht in meinem Schoss. |:

Ach, ich liebte, . . . etc.

Translations of Mozart Songs and Airs  
in back numbers of *The Gramophone*.

|   |                 |                      |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|
| <i>Deh ! vieni non tardar (Figaro)</i>    | .. .. .         | Vol. I., p. 225      |
| <i>Dove sono (Figaro)</i>                 | .. .. .         | „ II., p. 295        |
| <i>Porgi amor (Figaro)</i>                | .. .. .         | „ II., p. 295        |
| <i>Se vuol ballare (Figaro)</i>           | .. .. .         | „ III., p. 50        |
| <i>Madamina (Don Giovanni)</i>            | .. .. .         | „ II., p. 133        |
| <i>Schlafe mein Prinzchen, Wiegenlied</i> | .. .. .         | „ II., p. 57         |
| <i>In diesen heil' gen Hallen</i>         | } (Magic Flute) | .. .. . III., p. 103 |
| <i>Qui sdegno non s'accende</i>           |                 |                      |
| <i>O Isis und Osiris</i>                  | } (Magic Flute) | .. .. . III., p. 103 |
| <i>Possenti Numi</i>                      |                 |                      |
| <i>Zum leiden bin ich auserkoren</i>      | } (Magic Flute) | .. .. . III., p. 103 |
| <i>Ah, infelici, sconsolata</i>           |                 |                      |



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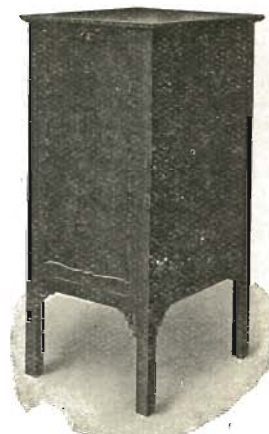
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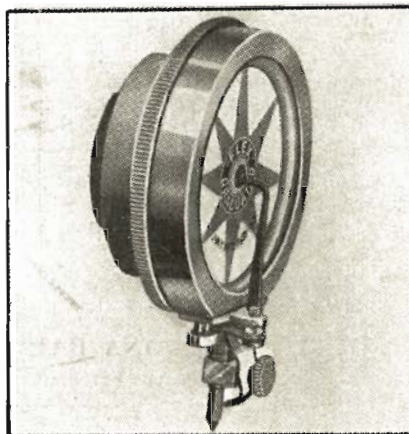


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Space does not permit for us to refer in detail to the various items on the December Supplement which embodies a remarkable collection of talent and titles, a veritable and complete entertainment with Herbert Thorpe, Harry Brindle and Herbert Teale in wonderful voice contributing to the greatest list Beltona has ever published. Seasonable titles for Xmas—Panto hits, fascinating dances and four entrancing tangos with songs, serio and comic, all combine to give the public the records in demand. Remember the Slogan—*Use Petmecky Needles*—your records will sound so different.

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- | No.  | TITLE.  |
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| 7001 | <b>Lohengrin's Narration</b> "Lohengrin" (Wagner).<br><b>Lend Me Your Aid</b> "La Reine de Saba" (Gounod).<br>Sung by Herbert Teale, Tenor, with Orch. Accom. |

**De Luxe Series 10 inch.**

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 6007 | <b>The Piper's Wedding</b> (Kennedy Thayne).<br><b>The B.B. and C.F.</b> (Exhibition Quick March) (J. Ord Hume).<br>Played by the Clydebank Burgh Brass Band. Conducted by J. D. Scoins.                                |
| 6008 | <b>Punchinello</b> (Rimmer).<br><b>Sons o' the Sea.</b> Fantasia (Rimmer).<br>Played by the Clydebank Burgh Brass Band. Conducted by J. D. Scoins.  |
| 6009 | <b>Land of Hope and Glory</b> (Elgar).<br>Euphonium Solo by Hugh T. Barthwick.<br><b>Il Bacio</b> (Arditi). Cornet Solo by George L. Macdonald.<br>Played by the Clydebank Burgh Brass Band. Conducted by J. D. Scoins. |
| 6010 | <b>Tam o' Shanter.</b> Fantasia, Parts 1 and 2 (arr. Round).<br>Played by the Clydebank Burgh Brass Band. Conducted by J. D. Scoins.  |
| 6013 | <b>The Lass with the Delicate Air</b> (arr. A. L. Arne).<br><b>The Brightest Day</b> (Easthope-Martin).<br>Sung by Winifred Brady, Soprano, with Piano Accom.   |
| 6017 | <b>I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby</b> (Clay).<br><b>Who is Sylvia?</b> (Schubert).<br>Sung by Herbert Thorpe, Tenor, with Piano Accom.   |

**De Luxe Series 10 inch.**

- | No.  | TITLE.  |
|------|---|
| 6018 | <b>The English Rose</b> "Merrie England" (German).<br><b>O Flower Divine</b> (Haydn Wood).<br>Sung by Herbert Teale, Tenor, with Piano Accom.   |
| 6019 | <b>A Hunting We will Go</b> (arr. E. Newton).<br><b>Here's to the Maiden of Bashful Fifteen</b> (arr. E. Newton).<br>Duets by Herbert Thorpe, Tenor, and Harry Brindle, Bass, with Piano Accom. |
| 6020 | <b>A Guld New Year</b> (Hume-Gleadhill).<br><b>Auld Lang Syne</b> (Traditional).<br>Sung by Harry Brindle, Bass, with Orch. Accom.  |
| 6021 | <b>Thou Shalt Break Them</b> "The Messiah" (Handel).<br><b>Total Eclipse</b> "Samson" (Handel).<br>Sung by Herbert Teale, Tenor, with Orch. Accom.  |

**Ordinary Series 12 inch.**

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|------|--|
| 5021 | <b>Abide with Me</b> (Liddle).<br><b>Softly Awakes My Heart</b> "Samson and Delilah" (Saint Saëns).<br>Sung by Minnie Mearns, Contralto, with Orch. Accom. |
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**Ordinary Series 10 inch.**

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| 874 | <b>Pantomime Hits.</b> Parts 1 and 2.<br>Played by The Beltona Military Band.  |
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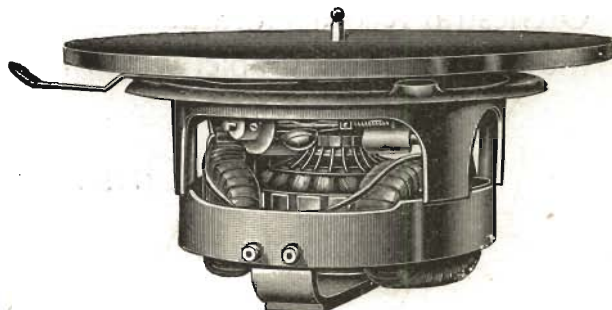
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